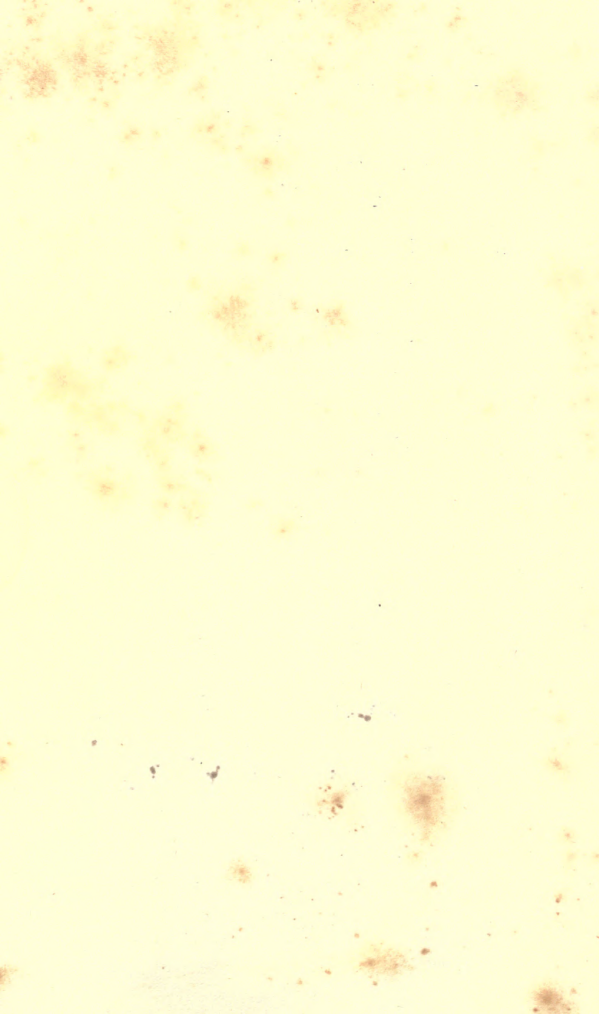


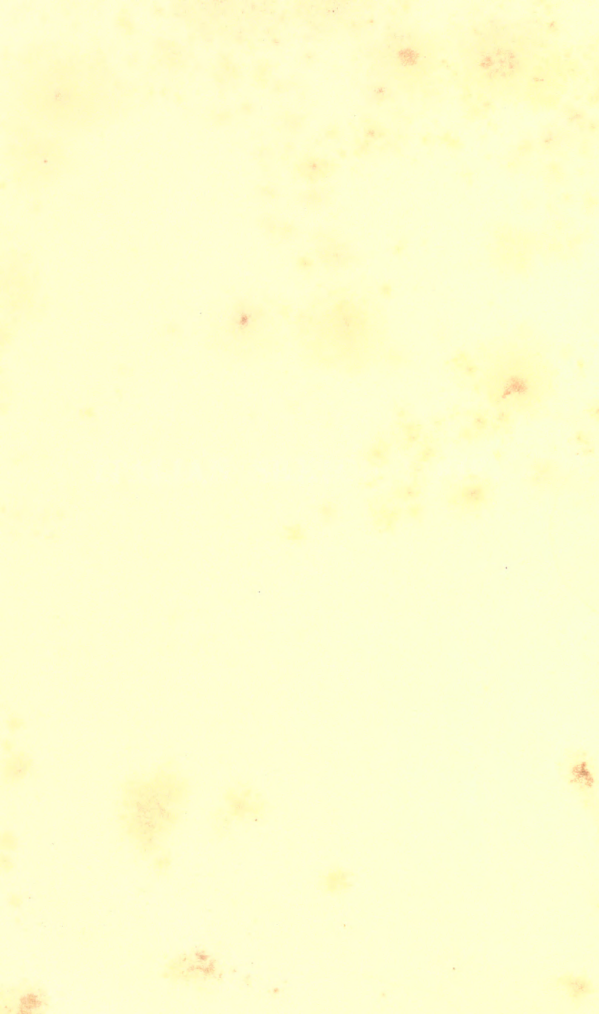
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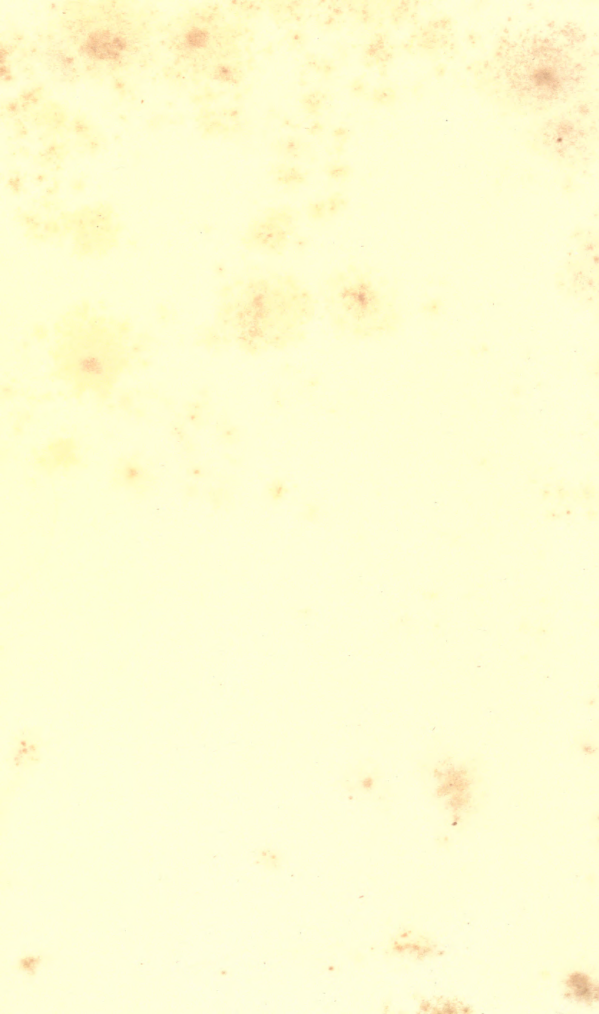


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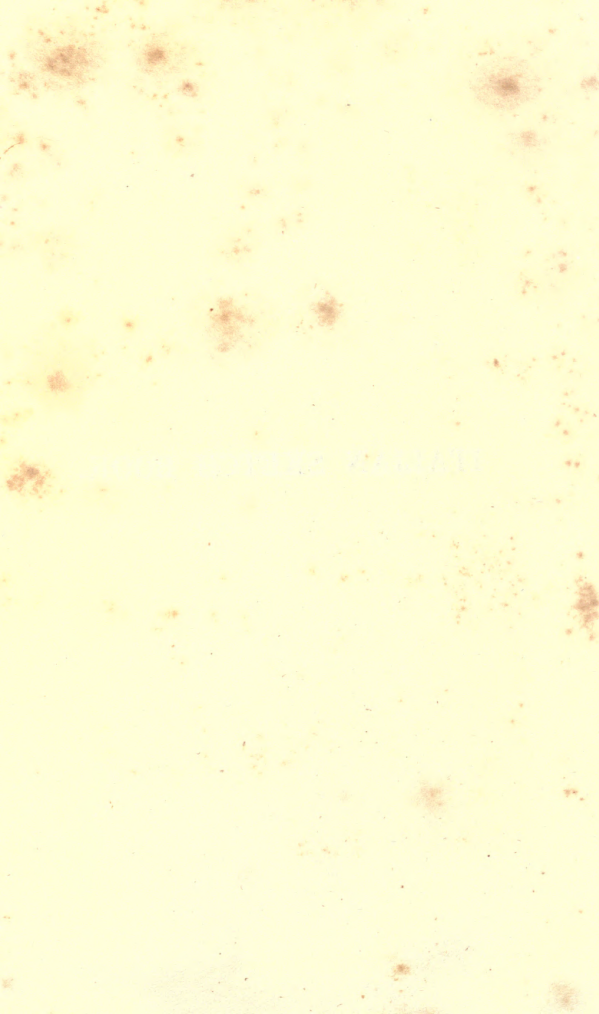
1871







ITALIAN SKETCH BOOK.





THE
ITALIAN SKETCH BOOK.

BY
HENRY T. TUCKERMAN.

Italia, oh, Italia ! thou who hast
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow ploughed by shame.
Yet, Italy ! through every other land
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side ;
Mother of arts ! as once of arms ; thy hand
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following pages comprise leaves from a Journal in Italy, in 1833-4, with Tales and Essays, illustrative of the local and social features of that interesting country. The unexpected favor with which the specimens that have appeared in literary journals were received, has induced a revision and presentation of them, in the form of a volume. Should this little work serve to revive the impressions of one who has sojourned in the regions of which it speaks, or pleasingly inform one who is precluded from beholding them—especially, should it tend, in the least degree, to awaken in any mind an interest and faith in humanity as there existent, or its perusal enliven an irksome, or beguile a painful hour, the author will feel that the time devoted to its production has not been spent in vain.



INTRODUCTION.

THERE are countries of the globe which possess a permanent and peculiar interest in human estimation—an interest proportioned in each individual to his intelligence, culture and philanthropy. They are those where the most momentous historical events occurred, and civilization first dawned, and of which the past associations and present influences are, consequently, in a high degree exciting. The history of these lands affords one of our most attractive sources of philosophical truth, as the reminiscences they induce excite poetical sentiment; and hence we very naturally regard a visit to them as an event singularly interesting, not to say morally important.

And yet personal impressions, on such occasions, are confessedly dependent upon circumstances which are, for the most part, uncontrollable. There are, however, certain positive meth-

ods, the adoption of which will not, indeed, bring about a complete agreement in the notions and sentiments of travellers, but will tend to a much more useful purpose—that of inducing a satisfactory result upon their own minds. Among these are a sense of the true nature of the comprehensive object they are about to contemplate, a patient determination to bestow a degree of time and study in a measure corresponding with the subject, a preparedness for disappointment, and an unyielding spirit of candor. Such a state of mind will especially influence happily the experience of the transatlantic sojourner in Italy, since it may not be denied that many things exist there, to qualify the enjoyment of the enthusiastic expectant, who has turned the eye of his imagination thither through the long and magnifying space which divides our continent from the old world.

The invalid discovers that even these genial regions are not exempt from wintry influences; the ardent observer must grieve to find the most interesting ruins contiguous to, and even invaded by the scenes of ordinary life, and the more conventional characteristics of the country fast disappearing before the ever increasing encroach-

ments of the stranger multitude; while the benevolent are constantly pained by the sight of distress which they cannot alleviate. Yet perhaps these very drawbacks tend to direct attention more completely to the many existing sources of satisfaction, and they certainly are not without a moral benefit. Never does the paramount importance of the innate habit, and the comparative worthlessness of the outward scene, become so self-evident, as when we thus *feel* the superiority of anticipation to enjoyment. And we know not, until standing by the spots renowned as the scenes of mighty exploits, denuded of the exhaustless drapery of fancy, that it is the acts themselves, with all their beautiful philosophy, which alone have hallowed these portions of the earth.

But frequent and favorable observation *will* develop the legitimate influences of Italy, and render us less sensible to untoward or disagreeable circumstances. Antiquity will become, in our view, more sacred; art will awaken a deeper interest; society will discover new charms; and, when we start upon our homeward pilgrimage, we shall perceive, with a sensation of wonder, the strength of the chain which binds us to the

land, and realize the subtle power of the agencies which have so silently woven it.

The impressions of an individual mind, noted during a considerable interval of time, will therefore possess more of this deliberate and eventual character. In imparting them, it seems unwise, at least, to run into the common error of portraying minutely the details of statues, paintings and edifices—descriptions, which often have the effect of exciting without satisfying curiosity; while graphic delineations of manners and customs have been too frequently and faithfully drawn to be attempted in the present instance. The aim has rather been to lead from particular descriptions to the general contemplation of such subjects as are prominently indicative of the scenes and intellectual influences of Italy.

SKETCHES.



ITALIAN SKETCH BOOK.

ROME.

“ Yet, this is Rome,
That sat upon her seven hills, and, from her throne
Of beauty, ruled the world ! Yet these are Romans.
Why, in that elder day, to be a Roman
Was greater than a king ! ”

In the light of a clear atmosphere we stood upon the summit of the Capitol, and thoughtfully gazed forth upon the city with its mountain-wall circling broadly in the distance. From so commanding a position, we were enabled to expand our idea of the site of ancient Rome, into a sensible conception of the relative localities and original aspect of her scattered and dimly defined remains.

Directly beneath us stood a massive form, whose sculptured and inscribed surface is uniformly tinged with the melancholy hue imparted by the earth which so recently encrusted it, and deepened by the lapse of ages. And yet, beneath

that arch have earth's most splendid pageants passed; eyes bedewed with the rich tears of grateful exultation, have dwelt upon its now defaced splendor; its broad foundations, resting heavily in their sunken bed, have trembled beneath the proud tread of the triumphing, and its concave rung with the inspiring shout of a Roman greeting. It was the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus.

Immediately beside it, in mournful companionship, rise three mutilated columns, all that exists of the noble tribute of gratitude raised by Augustus to the god of thunder, after returning unscathed from the rush of his awful shaft. A slower but not less sure agency has not passed negligently by the monument, and the naked triumvirate, clustered, as if in the "fellowship of grief," but feebly represent the living sentiment which gave them birth. The same number of these erect and solitary relics, lifting their burdenless capitals in air, furnish the commencement of an outline which observation may continue and imagination embody, of the temple of Jupiter Stator. Cold chroniclers of thrilling times are they; senseless spectators of what would kindle even the unenthusiastic, which else we might almost envy. It seems as if something of pride yet lingered about these decayed remnants of a once glorious company. They bore the vaulted roof, which echoed the most eloquent outpourings of moral indignation; they stood around, silent and stern, when

about them were the not less inflexible forms of the Roman soldiery, and the sudden gathering of her alarmed citizens; and within, the deliberate and imposing presence of the accuser, and the pale countenance and hurried glances of the accused;—for it was here that Cicero condemned Cataline. The temples of Concord and of Peace, the one boasting eight remaining columns, and the other three fragmentary arches, next attracted attention and suggested similar reminiscences.

But soon we were obliged to quit a scene so absorbing in its suggestive influences, to wander among the dense ranges of modern buildings, and descry, here and there, a few pillars or other remains of what once stood forth contributing their now isolated symmetry to the formation of a beautiful and perfect whole. The arches of Titus, Constantine and Janus respectively occupied and interested us, particularly the former, from the sacred vessels and symbols of the Jewish temple, exhibited in basso relievo, upon its interior surface. The niches of the last are dispossessed of the statues which once adorned them; the bronze fastenings which connected the stones are gone, and broad gaps mark the violence with which they were extricated. In the vicinity, we attentively perused the little square arch erected by the jewellers of the Forum to Septimius and his wife, and passing on, observed the pillars and site of the temples of Vesta and Fortune transformed into churches.

When we found ourselves near the wonderful old aqueducts contiguous to the walls, we were long amused with the peculiarities and impressed with the antiquated features of these strange and extensive remains. From some elevated positions, we gained a view of the neighboring mountains, lifting their undulating forms beneath the vapory masses of the dim atmosphere, and reflecting in faint yet rich tints, the few rays of sunshine which struggled through the leaden clouds. We had seen no general view more congenial with the ruins or more exciting to the associations of Rome.

On another occasion we left the city by the Appian Way, and were mindful of the circumstance of St. Paul's having entered by the identical road. After a considerable walk, we reached the tomb of the Scipios, situated by the roadside, and the entrance not distinguishable from other similar gate-ways, except by the inscription. Entering this, we soon came to the vault, secured merely with loose wooden doors, and having no distinctive beauty. With a guide and tapers we explored the dark and chilly avenues of this tomb, pausing here and there, to con the many inscriptions which exist upon the walls. Two of the sarcophagi are in the Vatican, but one or two yet remain. We soon hastened from this damp and melancholy sepulchre, whose earthy floor was worn by the feet of many curious pilgrims, like ourselves, and pondering upon the contrast

between the men who once reposed there, their probable anticipations of their country and the present, we extended our walk, and penetrated far into the labyrinthine catacombs beneath the church of St. Sebastian.

At length we arrived at the noble square, with its sweeping colonnade and old obelisk, which are about St. Peter's. Having entered that edifice, and immediately passing through a side door, we commenced ascending an inclined plane which winds round, is bricked, and continues for a long distance until it brings us out upon the roof. This wide space, with its several cupolas, has been aptly compared to a small village. We soon entered the first and second interior gallery of the dome, and thence looked down from an immense height upon the variegated marble floor, or immediately around upon the coarse mosaic figures. Still ascending, we reached the lantern, and obtained a most comprehensive view, embracing the city, the *campagna*, the distant snow-covered mountains, with a glimpse of the Mediterranean; and having stood in the copper ball which surmounts the whole building, we descended.*

* The necessity of attempting a description of this truly indescribable building is most happily superseded by the unrivalled paintings of Pannini, recently purchased by the Boston Athenæum. Let any one intently gaze upon the delineation of the interior of St. Peter's, and imagine the space which lies unrevealed in perspective, and he will obtain a more definite idea than any words can convey.

At one visit to St. Peter's, the several scenes presented most effectually aided me in realizing the vastness of the building. Two of the chapels were filled with children receiving Sabbath instruction, whose singing resounded pleasingly through the expanse. In one corner, some lads, seemingly designed for the priesthood, were loudly engaged in a dialogue, the purport of which was an exposition of the church ceremonies; these were eagerly listened to by a surrounding crowd. Around the circular and illuminated railing, which is about the descent to the tomb of the great apostle, kneeled many female figures, and another knot were clustered beneath his bronze image, and fervently kissing the worn foot; while, scattered upon the far-spreading pavement, and bending at the numerous shrines, were many devotees apparently absorbed in prayer. The confession-boxes, too, were unusually occupied, and the whole area thickly studded with the figures of those whom curiosity or devotion had brought thither. And yet these numerous and variously occupied human beings seemed, in no degree, to lessen the apparent space enclosed by those immense walls and that exalted dome, but rather to increase the impressiveness of the whole. I ever gratefully remarked the peculiar mildness and genial warmth of the atmosphere. It is even pretended by some of the inhabitants, that this phenomenon may be ascribed to the heat, which the dense

walls acquire during summer—a heat so great and so well retained as to continue partially latent, and be evolved during the few weeks when comparative coolness prevails. Many circumstances, however, contribute to the production of so pleasing an effect, particularly the admirable exposure of the building to the full influence of the sun, which beams through one or another of its many windows, during nearly the whole day, while the arrangement of the entrances almost precludes the admission of the external air.

But it was my special delight to visit St. Peter's, not critically to examine, but to yield myself freely to its sublimity and beauty. Sometimes I would rest in front of the monument to the last of the Stuarts, to sympathize in the mournful expression of its basso relievo angels of death, extinguishing, as if in sadness, the torch of life; or pause in admiration of the lions of Canova surmounting the tomb of Pope Clement XIII. As the setting sun shone gorgeously through the glory, over the main altar, and lingered upon the gilded cornices of the wall, it was mysteriously exciting to gaze on one of the splendid mosaic copies of the most eminent originals; for instance, that of Thomas satisfying his doubts. The perfect serenity of our Saviour's countenance, the determined inspection of the incredulous apostle, and, above all, the sad, yet mild and affectionate expression of John, riveted

my gaze and touched my sensibilities. I could almost believe that I saw a tremulous play of the muscles, or living softness of the features, as they were thus revealed in the twilight.

It was surpassingly interesting to roam through the quiet and rich precincts of this magnificent edifice, with an elevating sense of its excellence as a place of religious enjoyment. There is a freedom, a nobleness, a grandeur about St. Peter's, allied to intellect and sentiment in their higher manifestations. Within no structure, perhaps, does the human form dwindle to greater apparent insignificance; but in few spots does man yield more spontaneously or legitimately to a sense of his capacity for excellence. The idea that the building, which is filling and delighting his spirit, was planned by the intellect and reared by the labor of his species, and the thought of that Being to whose praises it is devoted—all this suggests itself with the view and its enjoyment.

Indeed, familiarity with the splendid temples of worship for which Italy is remarkable, rather augments than diminishes the spontaneous admiration which a first inspection of them excites; or rather, the primary emotions of pleasure melt into a calm sentiment of satisfaction, far more favorable to a discriminating view and just impression. The still but most efficient teachings of those three happy influences, painting, sculpture and architecture, seem here combined for the most felicitous ends. I could not but often think of

it as one of those consoling and redeeming things, which modify all the evil in the world, that these were places dedicated to Catholicism, but open to all and at all times;—places for reflection, devotion and thought, where one can wander contemplatively—the painted windows imparting a mellow light in which the pictured and sculptured forms seemed living things, and the notes of the chanters falling in reverberated echoes upon the ear—and worship after his own heart, or muse holily till the fire burns.

It was on a day marked by that deep azure, that seemingly penetrable density of the sky, so often celebrated by poets as the most enchanting natural feature of southern Italy, that we were early on our way to the Esquiline hill. Upon its summit stands, in comparative solitude, the church of St. Pietro in Vinculi, built to contain the chains of the great apostle whose name it bears. The effect ever derivable from simplicity, is signally exemplified upon entering this chaste building; for its interior architecture opens at once upon the vision, and, in its simple grandeur, imparts a far more delightful impression, than is often obtained from more extensive and gorgeous constructions. The form of the Basilica is here admirably preserved, the arched roof being supported by two rows of beautiful columns, and the whole space unbroken by any intermediate arches. These columns, as well as the pavement of the sacristy, were originally obtained from the

baths of Titus; the former are remarkably impregnated with sulphate of lime, so as to emit a sulphurous odor when slightly rubbed. Behind the altar is a richly wrought marble chair, probably a consular seat, obtained from the same ruins. The idea that Cicero might once have occupied it, occurred to us, and increased the interest with which we viewed so pleasing and authentic a Roman relic. Most of the pictures and frescos are illustrative of St. Peter's imprisonment and angelic enfranchisement; and within two brazen and embossed doors are preserved the sacred fetters, which are exposed to view only once a year.

But the grand attraction which had drawn us to this church was a renowned work of art—the statue of Moses by Michael Angelo. This colossal figure at once evinces the workmanship of a peculiar genius, the design differing wholly from what is familiar in statuary. There is a muscular power, a grandeur of outline, which sufficiently indicate the author. Indignation and awful energy are distinctly discernible in the heavy frown and stern expression of God's chosen messenger to a guilty and erring people.

The Capuchin convent—an example of another class of churches—imparts a very tolerable idea of the dreariness and sternness of a genuine monastic retreat. The lay brother who conducted us looked wonderfully thriving, and was withal surprisingly affable for an old denizen of the damp and

gloomy apartments which he so complacently displayed. The church, though by no means magnificent, contains two frescos of great interest :—one representing the archangel Michael triumphing over Satan, whose dark brawny form seems completely subdued beneath the light foot of his beautiful conqueror ; the other, a rough representation of St. Peter walking on the waves—one of the most ancient examples of this species of painting. Indeed this convent is many centuries old, and the very hue and primitive material of the Capuchin garb comport admirably with the antique appearance of the whole building and its contents. But the greatest peculiarity is the cemetery beneath. A number of arches extend some distance, against the walls of which are piled an immense number of the bones of the deceased Capuchins. In spaces left about midway, are stretched skeletons, clad in the habit of the order, and others stand in various parts of the awful repository, while the ground, composed of “holy earth,” transported at great expense from Jerusalem, is marked as the last resting-place of the later dead. The very lamps which hang from the walls, are composed of bones ; and the same material, distributed most fantastically, furnishes meet accompanying ornaments. Perhaps this kind of burial, if such it may be called, is one of the rarest in practice by moderns. The effect by torch-light, when an interment takes place, must be impressive in the extreme ; though

with the broad light of day shining through the windows, the scene seemed more hideous than morally striking; nor can one easily feel that the intended honor is conferred upon the unbroken skeletons, by permitting them to stand holding a card, upon which is inscribed the name and age of the deceased, like guardians of the mournful piles around them, in which are merged the remains of their less distinguished brethren.

We crossed the Tiber in a broad barge; and during the few moments which intervened ere our walk recommenced, we were naturally led to contrast the turbid waters and the dim earth around us, with the same scene, in its transcendent aspect, as existing in the familiar picture of our fancy. The one was the plain appearance of neglected and perhaps degenerate nature; the other, impressions derived from nature's glowing commentator, the poet. Passing by a retired path through the fields, we soon came in view of a circular fortress, (the Castle of St. Angelo,) now chiefly used as a prison, but originally the tomb of Hadrian. And certainly, when its solid proportions were decked with the numerous statuary ornaments which once adorned them, it must have formed a glorious final resting-place for a Roman. There is a striking and melancholy inconsistency observable in this, as in many instances, in the modern appropriation of ancient monuments. So much more honorable is it to the general or at least to the better sentiment of

mankind, to leave unmarred the few remnants of a nation's greatness, when not one of her children exists. There is surely a kind of sacrilege in disturbing works consecrated to the dead, for purposes of selfish pride or narrow utility. The beauty, the interest, the blessed inspiration which so often hallow these ruins, are thus invaded, while no commensurate advantage is obtained. Have not as many smiles of ridicule or sneers of reproach, as pious feelings, been awakened, by the view of the apostle's figures surmounting the triumphal pillars of Aurelius and Trajan? And who can behold, without regret, the mausoleum of the mighty dead transformed into a tomb for the most wretched of the living?

We ascended a long flight of steps, entered a square and corridor, and were soon in the Museum of the Vatican. It were vain to endeavor to describe what an impression of the richness of art is inspired by the first general inspection of this vast collection of her redeemed trophies; and far more, to paint the vivid and elevating conception of her power which dawns, brightens, and finally glows in the bosom, as face after face of thrilling interest, figure after figure of embodied nature, and gem after gem of exquisite material or workmanship attracts the admiring eye; all unanimated by one spiritual principle, and yet so legitimately the offspring of the highest, and so perfectly significant, as to awaken wonder,

enkindle delight, and finally win love. We devoted a season to the inspection and admiration of the time-worn frescos, which exist upon the walls of the Camere of Raphael. Constantine's victory is, indeed, a splendid battle-piece. But of all the figures, none struck me as grander than the group representing the miraculous defeat of the ravager of the temple, struck down by a cavalier, and two angels, at the prayer of the priest. Most of the countenances here depicted are separate and noble studies. All the frescos were partially designed and executed by Raphael. They present a worthy but melancholy monument to his genius, impaired as they are by age, and marred by his untimely death. Yet artists of the present day are continually studying these dim, though most admirable remains, and find in their contemplation the happiest aids and incitements. Notwithstanding this speaking testimony to departed excellence, as well as that which beamed in the admiring looks of the gazers around, there was something of sadness in the very air of rooms that bore the name, and shone with the embodied talent of the beloved and early dead, which forced itself irresistibly upon the mind, and tinged with mournfulness the gratified thoughts.

But it is when we stand for the first time in the presence of that being, if aught destitute of sensation deserve the name—it is when the eye first rests, and the heart first fastens with instinctive

eagerness upon the Apollo Belvidere, that we feel the triumph of human art. And there springs up a rich sentiment of satisfaction, not only that the poetical in native feeling, the pure in taste, and the exalted in thought, are conscious of unwonted gratification, but because we rejoice in the spiritual nobility of our common nature; we glory in the thought that the senseless marble radiates the beautiful and deep expressiveness of intellectual life at the call of human genius, and we are soothed by the testimony thus afforded to the immortality of what we most love in ourselves and kind; for we feel that such followers of nature are allied to its Author, and may humbly, but legitimately, aspire to yet higher teachings than are evolved from the physical universe.

I entered, on a fine clear day, the large enclosed tract called the Gardens of Sallust, being the site of that beautiful historian's villa and grounds. There are a few ill-defined ruins here situated, supposed to be those of a temple dedicated to Venus Erycina, and of the mansion, or its adjuncts. The general aspect presented during my wanderings through this extensive enclosure, was more in accordance with the idea previously formed of the country than any before obtained. The fertility of the grounds, green with varied shrubbery, and occasionally beautified with field-flowers, and thickly planted with vegetables, among which groups of laborers were actively engaged, afforded remarkable evidence of the

actual mildness of the climate; while occasional glimpses of an old aqueduct, or wall, gave to the scene the surpassing charm of antiquity. Constant blasts of cold wind, in which the dry reeds rattled sullenly, and the snow-capped Apennines in the distance were, however, sufficiently indicative of the season. The free air and commanding situation of this domain are well adapted to foster that concise and clear energy, which so highly distinguishes Sallust. If this was the favorite retreat to which he retired to compose his history, it is not surprising that he found in the situation and his employment greater satisfaction than could be gleaned from the enslaving luxury of the city, which lies so attractively at the foot of his paternal mount. It was a pleasant thought, that this very spot is that which beguiled his early ambition from the hazardous efforts of a political arena, to the quiet and dignified employment of an elegant historian. And in contemplating the result of this author's wise choice, and comparing his with the lives of many of his equally gifted countrymen, a new proof is afforded of the surpassing excellence of well-directed literary labor. More peaceful and elevated passes the existence, and more certain and purely succeeds the renown of the useful and excellent writer, than that of the most successful aspirant for immediate popularity. There is, too, a beautiful completeness in the works and fame of Sallust, such as seldom marks the memory or

the labors of modern writers. Confining himself to one sphere, and intent upon comparatively few subjects, he shone pre-eminently in the one, and threw over the other a light and vigor of delineation, which render his works not only universally interesting, as just and vivid chronicles, but as most attractive illustrations of the capacities of his native language.

I proceeded at a similar season forth from the city, by the spacious and beautiful entrance of the Piazza del Popolo, towards the Ponte Molle. When we reached this celebrated bridge, the beauty of the adjacent country and distant scenery, as well as the associations of the spot, detained me in long and delightful contemplation. On the one side rises Monte Mario, crowned with a verdant line of lofty cypresses, and on the other, far away, stand the hoary Apennine hills, while beneath runs the swift and turbid Tiber. The picturesque, arched, and heavy bridge on which I stood, still retaining portions of its ancient material, and the pervading Sabbath stillness, gave vividness and scope to the grand scene of action, which memory and imagination conjured up and arrayed upon its massive surface, and along the broken banks of the river. But, happily, in viewing the scene of Constantine's victory and miraculous vision, we are not left to unaided fancy in an attempt to renew the view preserved in history. We have but to recall the almost living delineation of Raphael, to arrive at

a strong conception of what could otherwise be but vaguely and variously fancied. It is on such occasions that we learn to recognize one, among our many obligations, to genius and art. Gazing, after the lapse of centuries, upon the renowned battle-ground where tyranny received a signal overthrow, from a christian warrior eminent for victory, and finding nought but the altered aspect of nature and a few decayed relics of art, we can yet rehearse the history and the song, and ponder the picture, till they realize the time-buried events of antiquity.

It was one of those days when a pensive stillness pervades nature—the sky overclouded, yet threatening no rain, the sun peering dimly forth, and a quiet, almost sad in its lifelessness, brooding over the sullen fields and declining foliage—a day, in short, the melancholy language of which brings something of pleasure to the man of anxious temperament, and to whose meditative influences even the practised worldling not unwillingly yields himself—a day, on which the student instinctively turns from his book to ponder; the active denizen of the busy or gay world is unwontedly and unwittingly thoughtful; and many a day-dreamer or philosophical sportsman, like old Walton, wanders longer through the fields, and indulges in deeper imaginings and more protracted reveries. Such a season was peculiarly adapted to the purpose for which I had assigned it—a visit to the tomb of Cecilia Metella.

The very thought of it brings to mind Childe Harold's characteristic description :

“There is a stern round tower of other days,
Firm as a fortress with its fence of stone,
Such as an army's baffled strength-delays,
Standing with half its battlements alone,
And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
The garland of eternity, where wave
The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown ;—
What was this tower of strength ? Within its cave
What treasures lie so locked, so hid ?—A woman's grave.

This celebrated ruin, one of the most satisfactory, as regards its authenticity and preservation, among all the Roman antiquities, is situated about a league from the centre of the city, upon the Via Appia. Its circular form and remarkably dense walls, composed on the exterior of marble, now partially decomposed, proclaim its pristine magnificence. The obscurity which veils the history and character of her whose ashes it once contained, renders it, to one at all given to vague imaginings, more eloquent than if it were the concomitant of a most interesting and elaborate chronicle. The inscription possesses the same sublime simplicity, which is one of the noblest indications of ancient Roman greatness, discoverable in her monumental remains. As if, in announcing the tomb to be that of Cecilia, wife of Crassus, and daughter of Metellus, enough was expressed to convey every adequate impression to the beholder, of whatever age or country !

The near kinswoman of two Roman citizens;—this one fact was deemed a distinct indication to posterity of the actual nobility of the entombed, while one glance at the splendid sepulchre would convey ample testimony to her worth and loss. But even we of later times, who can smile at, while we admire such perfect confidence in the simple greatness of citizenship and individual character, and who can gaze with the coldness of curiosity upon such a relic, even we can scarcely fancy any record capable of exciting such awakening sentiment. It comports, in its brevity, with the great lesson it teaches—the rapid flight and levelling influence of time; and designating a double ruin, it affords a degree of knowledge which, if extended, would but carry out and define where vagueness is desirable. For free scope is thus given to a species of conjecture, which it is mournfully pleasing to indulge. Standing by the massive remains of such a mausoleum, of which we can only affirm that it was reared to the memory of a Roman wife and daughter—what trait of energetic beauty, of affectionate devotion, of moral courage, which enters into the *beau-ideal* of the female character, may we not confidently ascribe to this? What a life of secluded, yet elevated virtue, what a death of solemn dignity might not have been hers! How large a part might she have taken in refining, ay, and nerving the spirit of husband and child and brother—in producing that obsolete and

wonderful being, a Roman citizen! And if aught of such fancies is correct, how like her earthly destiny to that of innumerable of her sex, who live in the exercise of thoughts and sentiments which, if developed through more conspicuous channels, would be productive of deathless renown; but whose self-sacrificing ministrations, though immeasurably influential, are as unseen as those of a guardian angel, while the memory of their authors is only embalmed in heaven, or darkly transmitted, like that of Cecilia Metella, by the simple record of their names and kindred, upon the monument which conscientious affection has reared.

Of all impressions from antiquity, derived from the ruins of Rome, none is more vivid and lasting than that inspired by the Coliseum, when viewed under circumstances best calculated for effect. Such are the quiet and mystery, the shadowy aspect and mild illumination of moonlight. Availing myself of a season like this, it was with something of awe that I approached to partake of a pleasure in its very nature melancholy, yet in the highest degree attractive to the imagination, and calculated to awaken many of the deepest sentiments, especially those by which the fellow-feeling of our race is nurtured and sustained. And as the scene, in all its actual beauty, environed by associations more impressive than its past magnificence, and reposing in a light more tender than gleamed from the eager

eyes which once shone out from its now dim arches, broke upon my sight, I seemed to have come forth to hold communion—not with the material form, but with the very spirit of antiquity. There, its massive walls circling broadly, pre-eminent in lingering pride, stands the Coliseum. As the monarch of ruins, its dark outline seems defined with most commanding prominence, while surrounding objects are lost or blended in shade. Its many arched recesses are rendered still more obscure by the veil of shadow, or partially revealed in the congenial light. Through some of them the silent stars may be seen at their far-off vigils in the heavens, and again a fragment, which the hand of time has spared, abruptly bars the view. Over some, the long grass, that sad frieze which antiquity ever attaches to the architecture of man, hangs motionless, and, as a lattice, divides the falling moonbeams, or waves gently in the night breeze. But it is when standing beneath one of those arches, and vainly scanning the length of the half-illuminated corridor, or looking down upon the grass-grown area, marked by a single path, that a sense of the events and times of which this ruin is a monument, and its suggestions the epitaph, gradually gains upon the attention, like the home thoughts which a strain of familiar music has aroused. The gorgeous spectacle of Rome's congregated wisdom and beauty thronging the vast galleries, now lost or crumbling through age, the

glitter of wealth, the pomp of power, the eagerness of curiosity, and the enthusiasm of varied passions, which once rendered this a scene of unequalled pageantry—all come, at the call of memory, to contrast themselves with the same scene now, clad in the solemnity of solitude and decay.

But yet another retrospection, inducing deeper emotions, occupies the mind, and throws over the scene a higher interest. What an amount of human suffering have these dark walls witnessed! Could they but speak, what a tale of horror would be unfolded! How often has man, in all his savage or his cultivated dignity, been abandoned in this wide area to the beasts of the forest—more solitary when surrounded by his unpitying kind, than when alone with the lordly brute, in his desert domain! How much of human blood has this damp earth drunk, and how often upon its clammy surface has the human form been stretched in agony or death! Nor was this the theatre of effort and wo only to the physical nature. Who can estimate the pangs of yearning affection which have wrung the departing spirit, the feeling of utter desolation with which the barbarian has laid down his unsupported head, and died in the midst of his enemies? Who can distinctly imagine the concentration of every sentiment in that of the love of existence, which has nerved the arm of the combatant, and the stern despair with which he has at length

relinquished his dearly sold life? Far less might one hope to realize the deep energy with which the martyr to his faith has here given proof of its power. There is something holy in a spot which has witnessed the voluntary sacrifice of existence to the cause of christianity. Of beautiful and sublime, as well as terrible spectacles, has this been the scene. Where has youth seemed so pure in its loveliness, or manhood so noble in its might, or age so venerable in its majesty, as here? If, in this ruined amphitheatre, humanity has been most debased, by the despoiling hand of cruelty, where has she exhibited more of the sublimest of her energies—the spirit of self-sacrifice? Often as this air has wafted the sighs and groans of suffering and remorse, has it not likewise borne upward the prayer of faith, and the thanksgiving of joyful confidence? Though glances of ferocity and revenge have been turned, in impotent malignity, through this broad opening to the smiling sky above, how often have eyes beaming with forgiving love, or fixed in religious fervor, looked into its blue depths, from the awful death of the Coliseum!

And yet, while the abandonment and decay of Flavian's amphitheatre plainly indicate the departure of those ideas and customs in accordance with which it was reared, the question forcibly suggests itself to the observer of its remains, has the principle, which sustained so long an institution like this, utterly and forever departed?

Have we nothing in *our* experience, resembling what seems to have originated in a deeper sentiment than caprice, and from its long continuance and popularity, has an apparent foundation in our nature? The reply to such self-interrogations is affirmative. What student of humanity, or observer of man, does not recognize the same principle operating eternally? Those who hold the system of christianity, in its purity, hold the whole philosophy of the principle. Individual man has arrayed against him the varied force of circumstances without and passion within. Of the insidiousness, the power of these opponents, who is ignorant? And there are, too, spectators—too often as heartless, curious, and cold lookers on, as those which thronged the galleries of the Coliseum.

Next to the Coliseum, as an architectural remain, is the Pantheon. Its magnificent dome, antiquated and immense pillars, and old pavement, combine to realize the high anticipations with which it is visited. The proximity of this grand building to the scenes of ordinary life, exposed to the sounds and influences ever present in populous cities, and especially marred by the emblems of the popular faith, and surrounded by the filth of a market place, are circumstances which strike one most disagreeably, and break in most inharmoniously upon his cherished associations.

The ruins called the "Baths of Caracalla" are massive and broken walls, indicative of former magnificence only from their number. Rank weeds have quite overgrown the space which they enclose. All the decorations and luxurious arrangements are gone; the former are either destroyed, converted into ornaments for modern churches, or preserved in the public museums. As one walks amid these deserted remains, a sense of solitude and mournfulness powerfully affects him, even beneath the cheerful light of noon-day. The extensive site of these baths realizes, in a measure, our ideas of the state of elegant luxury to which the Romans had attained. The Baptistry of St. Constantine, a small octagonal building, contains several pillars of red porphyry, and two brazen gates, taken from these baths.

The summit of the Palatine Hill is, however, occupied with ruins still more remarkable, even considered as architectural vestiges. So complete is the deformity and decay which time and violence have worked upon that luxurious abode of royalty, the palace of the Cæsars, that no observation, however critical, can discover any evidence of former splendor, except what is discoverable in the extent and solidity of the broken and straggling walls. These stand in heavy groups, or isolated and towering fragments, while about them the gay forms of vegetable life flour-

ish, with a fertility that seems to mock the barrenness of the ruins which their green and clustering beauty but imperfectly conceals. As I wandered there, the mildness of the air was wonderful for the season, and the bright sunlight, verdant earth, and beautiful surrounding prospect, took from the view the sadness usually observable, in scenes the prominent features of which are antiquated. Yet, though the sterner shades of the picture were thus mellowed, its solemn lesson was as forcibly imparted.

“Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
Thou nameless column with the buried base!
What are the laurels of the Cæsar’s brow!
Crown me with ivy from his dwelling place.”

In the statue gallery of the Museum of the Capitol, comparatively little is found to excite admiration in the mind of one familiar with the treasures of the Vatican. The Dying Gladiator differed essentially from the notion I had previously entertained respecting it. The chief, the particular merit of this celebrated statue seems to consist in its admirable expression of *physical* suffering. The position, in view of the wound, is so perfectly true to nature, (as described and illustrated by Dr. Bell,*) that one cannot but study it with growing satisfaction. But he must,

* Vide Bell’s Philosophy of Expression,

I think, be very imaginatively disposed, to discover that look of mental anguish, and dying sentiment, which might be naturally anticipated.

In the Borgehese Palace I paid frequent and admiring attention to the most interesting work it contains—Raphael's Deposition from the Cross. The picture hall of the Palazzo Colonna must, when illuminated, present one of the finest scenes of the kind in Rome. After inspecting the views by Claude, and several works by the old masters, I became much interested in examining a beautiful cabinet, the frontal exterior of which is very ingeniously carved in ivory. The middle panel represents, in exquisite basso relievo, the masterpiece painting of M. Angelo, and affords a much better idea of the design of that work than a distant view of the defaced original can give. At the old dreary palace of the Barbarini, I paused long before two famous original paintings—Raphael's Fornarina, and Guido's Portrait of Beatrice Cenci. The one from the perfection displayed in its execution, the other from the melancholy history of its subject,* are highly attractive.

* "I am cut off from the only world I know,
From life, and light, and love, in youth's sweet prime.
You do well telling me to trust in God.
I hope I do trust in him. In whom else
Can any trust? And yet my heart is cold."

Beatrice in Prison—Shelley's Tragedy of the Cenci.

The churches of St. John Lateran* and St. Maria Maggiore are next to St. Peter's in extent and richness. Among the numerous temples of worship delightful to frequent, is the Chiesa St. Maria degli Angeli, a noble building in the form of the Greek Cross, and rendered imposing by a grand dome and extensive pavement. It contains a famous meridian, and two fine frescos—St. Peter performing a cure, and the Baptism of our Saviour. The celebrated Sybils of Raphael are in the Church of St. Maria della Pace, and the Christ of M. Angelo in that of St. Maria sopra Minerva. There is, too, a small church near the Forum, said to be the identical prison where St. Peter and St. Paul were confined. When visiting this building, we descended a considerable flight of steps, and came to a gloomy dungeon, the traditionary cell of the great apostles. The very stone, fenced strongly with iron, to which they were chained, is designated. While endeavoring to feel that this very vault had indeed been the scene of suffering and prayer to the revered martyrs, a severe task was imposed upon our credulity. A small excavation in the wall above the stair-case, guarded like the relic below, we were informed was occasioned by a blow which the guard gave St. Peter as he descended, caus-

* In the vicinity are the Scala Sacra, or Holy Stairs, said to be the stairs of Pilate's Judgment Seat, which our Saviour ascended. They are continually mounted by innumerable devotees upon their knees.

ing his head to strike and miraculously shatter the stone. In a neighboring church, called Ara Cœli, we admired an exquisite marble altar, said to have been erected by Augustus.

A bright Sabbath morning found me seated in the little chapel of a monastery, the dark and riveted walls of which denoted its antiquity. A few individuals were seated upon the wicker chairs around; and between the lattice work of the partition, several nuns might be seen, quietly engaged in their devotions. I had come thither to witness the ceremony by which two females entered upon their noviciate. When the chapels on either side of the lattice were well nigh filled, and a priest, robed for the occasion, had placed himself near the grate, an elderly preacher approached, and seating himself, addressed impassionately the kneeling females. His discourse, couched in the symphonic accents of the Italian, and delivered with singular energy, was not without impressiveness. He painted in glowing colors the temptations to which humanity is exposed upon the arena of the world, the moral safety and satisfaction of religious seclusion, the beauty and acceptableness in the sight of Heaven of the consecration of the young and the warm-hearted—even such as they who knelt silently by—to the cause of Christ and the Church. The priest and his assistants then chanted from the ritual for some time, the silvery voices of the nuns blending melodiously with the choruses.

At length the clear yet hesitating voices of the noviciates might be heard as they read their vows. Their interesting appearance, and the associations of the moment, were not inoperative upon those of us to whom the scene was new; there was a kind of sad and thrilling poetry in their very tones.

The first Sunday in Advent is one of those days when services are attended by the Pope in the Sistine Chapel. I willingly embraced the opportunity to obtain a view of his Holiness. The comparatively small room, one of the halls of the Vatican, was surrounded at an early hour by a large concourse of strangers. We passed through the whole band of Swiss guards, drawn up in the colonnade. These, although somewhat picturesque in their appearance, always reminded me of the soldiers of the opera house or the stage, as the ruff they wear, and something in their *tout ensemble*, seems more scenic than actual—more designed for effect than action. Upon entering, I looked intently upon a work of art of which I had heard much—said to be, in fact, the most meritorious and wonderful of paintings—the Last Judgment, by Michael Angelo, covering the entire back wall of the chapel. With all my gazing, however, I could but descry numerous and apparently most muscular figures, in various positions, the centre one in the attitude of command. Subsequent inquiry and reading, in some degree, explain the disappointment caused by a

first view of this renowned production. Its chief merit consists in the bold yet natural development of the forms, and the mathematical precision of the execution. It is, in a word, a grand study for the artist, and would more immediately affect the merely curious, had not time defaced, and did not a bad position obscure its merits. The living pageant, however, soon attracted attention. Many cardinals, bishops and other dignitaries, with their purple robes and ermine decorations, occupied the innermost division. But the Pope entering, riveted the attention of most of the audience. Nothing remarkable in his physiognomy strikes the beholder, except an unusually prominent nose. There was much apparent seriousness and devotion evinced by this personage, and indeed by the whole assembly. The chanting was solemn, though not remarkable; and to one devotionally disposed, the whole service was by no means void of grateful influence.

At the studio of Thorwaldsen, there is much to interest and gratify the visitor, whether the intrinsic and individual merit, or the remarkable number of his works be considered. The sunny face of the shepherd boy, as he sits contemplatively with his dog beside him, is truly inimitable; as are the Three Graces, and Mercury in the act of taking advantage of the sleep into which his music has lulled Argus. Of all unclassical specimens of sculpture, the figure of Lord Byron in a surtout and heavy shoes, with

a pencil in hand, with which he presses his lip meditatively, here seen, is the most singular. The birth-place of this distinguished artist is not certainly known. His earliest recollection of himself is that of being on board a ship, in the capacity of cabin-boy. His origin is, however, undoubtedly northern, and most probably Icelandic. After surmounting many difficulties, and attaining some rank in his art, he visited Iceland. To this island, it is said, he purposes bequeathing the greater part of his collections and property. Some of his greatest works have been executed for the northern nations; and colossal statues of our Saviour and the twelve apostles are now in progress for a church in Russia.

There is a work at present, only dead-colored, upon the easel of Overbeck, which, if completed in the same noble manner that marks its conception, will indeed prove glorious. It is called the Christian Parnassus, representing the fine arts in the persons of the great artists; and the groups ascending, at length terminate in the figures of the Saviour and Madonna. The likenesses, even in this early sketch, are beautiful, and easily recognized; and the gracefulness and vigor of delineation with which ninety-two forms are pictured on a comparatively small canvass, indicates the genius of the artist. I also remarked a very expressive and almost finished painting by the same hand—our Saviour at prayer in the Garden.

The impassioned, yet calm spirit of earnest devotion, radiated from the wrapt countenance of the kneeling form, is finely contrasted with the angry and expectant glances of the distant crowd, pressing on through the still obscurity, to seize upon their victim.

When the literary pilgrim or susceptible observer has become familiar with the aspect and suggestion of Rome's antiquities and treasures of art, he has yet another spot of hallowed earth to tread, another locality to visit, as a shrine whose associations will wreath his spirit as with incense, till it is penetrated with sentiments of sympathy, sadness and love. There may be here excited less of the sublime in association, induced by the distance of the retrospect with which the stricken and lone memorials of extinct national greatness are pondered; but there is room for more home-felt emotion, and occasion for less grand and critical, but more touching comment, than the antiquity of art and the ruins of grandeur can present. This spot is indeed neglected by the antiquarian, and has been often passed by, with the greatest indifference, by the merely fashionable visitor; but who of us that loves the poetry of his native tongue, and rare specimens of human character, will not fondly and feelingly linger in the sequestered English burying-ground, at the graves of Shelley and Keats? He will there read the same lesson which more imposing

monuments had imparted, with deeper emphasis perhaps, but not in tones of more melting penetration. The romantic imagination, remarkable mental independence, and extreme sensitiveness of the former of these poets, combined, as they were, with high native and acquired powers, and associated with a fate so deeply melancholy, give a truly poetical coloring to our recollections of him. Short and unappreciated was the life of poor Keats, and his death a martyrdom. The little left for friendship to record of him was the beautiful brilliancy of young genius, its primitive hopefulness, the susceptibility which gave effect to hireling opposition, and the gloomy flickering and extinction of that vitality which alone connected an unsophisticated genius to an unsympathizing and uncongenial world. And what is this but a common story in the chronicles of humanity? Through the perspective and magnifying light of time, it may possess more prominently mournful features, but, wherever contemplated, it is essentially the same—the conquest of gross power, grosser taste, and indiscriminate will, over the casket of a gem, the conventional form of an existence, the temporary habitation of a soul. Thus has it been of old, and this is alike the history of an ancient martyr and the victim of a modern sacrifice. The intelligent sentiment which impelled and sustained, may essentially differ, but the course—the consummation—is the

same. The chief distinction between the suffering and final self-devotion of the unyielding in faith, whose life was laid down in an ancient amphitheatre, and that of Keats, is that the one perished, according to the customs of the age, by the hand of violence, and in the other, the dormant fires of disease were renewed, and the lingering progress of decay speeded fatally onward. "Here lies one whose name was writ in water:"—an epitaph dictated, like this, at the very gates of death, yet bespeaks the poet; and, like every poetical sentiment, is replete with latent truth. That name was indeed written in water, but the pencillings of a progressive and discerning spirit could have deepened the inscription upon an adamantine surface of crystal. But what these have failed to do, pity and congeniality are ever doing; and in innumerable hearts, the memory of Keats is cherished with a love surpassing even what the efforts of his maturer genius could have inspired.*

Among the odd traits observable in the Roman population, is their aversion to two luxuries especially esteemed in more northern countries, and though somewhat matters of taste, yet not alto-

* Hazlitt has justly observed that Keats's "ostensible crime was, that he had been praised in the *Examiner* newspaper: a greater and more unpardonable offence probably was, that he was a true poet, and had all the errors and beauties of a youthful genius to answer for. Mr. Gifford was as insensible to the one as he was inexorable to the other."

gether unallied to a higher sentiment; these are flowers and fire. The latter, during winter, is as truly physically requisite as in colder climates; but less surprise should be excited by this antipathy, among a people whose idea of comfort is so widely different from our own, and to whom this cheerful influence brings with it none of the domestic associations which endear it to the denizens of bleaker localities, and the possessors of a better founded enthusiasm. The former distaste is more remarkable, when we consider the proverbial predilections of the Italians for the beautiful; and yet it is to a surprising extent true, that most are indifferent, and many decidedly averse to flowers; whereas, in Florence, we were ever beset with flower-girls; and the Neapolitan peasants are seldom seen without a nosegay. I have heard this peculiarity of the Romans ascribed to their very delicate sense of smell, which renders even a mild perfume quite overpowering; but it is difficult to admit a reason which is so inconsistent with their habitual toleration of far less genial odors, particularly the unwholesome exhalations from the buried aqueducts and infected *campagna*.

Although the period of my sojourn was considered, in some respects, an uncommon season, yet the excellence of the climate of Rome, according to my best information and experience, has been sadly exaggerated. During winter, a south-

erly wind, with the usual accompaniment of rain or humidity, or a dry piercing northerly blast, generally prevails. The bright summer-like days, when the deep azure of the sky, and the balmy softness of the breezes, recall our cherished imaginings of Rome, are too unfrequent, at least to please the invalid. Yet *one* of these beautiful interludes in the capricious shiftings of the weather is, if freely enjoyed, unspeakably renovating. A promenade upon the Pincian Hill or in the Villa Borgehese, or an excursion to Tivoli, at such a time, inclines one to forgive and forget all the past waywardness of the elements. In summer, that awful vapory infection—the *malaria*, and the extreme heat, are alike deleterious. It is very confidently asserted, by individuals who judge from experience, that a vast change has occurred in the climate of Rome within the last thirty years; and that even within a less period, a marked difference, as regards constancy and mildness, is observable.

The supremacy of the pope and his cardinals, denominated the sacred college, being all but absolute, the risk incurred by such a sway renders the government extremely tenacious and jealous, so that of all culprits of whom the law takes cognizance, none are at once more frequently or less deservedly its victims than political offenders. But the chief evil immediately resulting from this condition of things, consists in the concessions

which the rulers make to the ruled, in order to maintain their authority. Many of these involve the total subversion of the very principles which government is mainly instituted to uphold. Capital crime, for example, is of all offences the least liable to retribution by the operation of law, in the Roman states. And such is the sanguinary temperament of most of the people, that any severe civil check upon it would inflame opposition, and hence render their political yoke more galling. Of the two evils, therefore, as might be anticipated, government choose that which is morally greatest, and politically least. Consequently, the number of personal violences and murders is almost incredible. An incarceration of a few months, for this highest of crimes, is often the sole punishment; and even this is dispensed with, if the offender can effect a pecuniary compromise with the relations of the deceased. Within a short period, the fourth murder, under the most atrocious circumstances, alone sufficed to bring a noted culprit to the gallows.

The present pope, it is believed, in executing plans for the advancement of his own views, is gradually undermining one of the strong holds of his power. The re-erection of St. Paul's church, in the environs of Rome, in a costly style, and the creation of five new cardinals—both measures in every respect unnecessary, are among the extravagant plans with which he is charged. The

means of carrying on these is obtained from extensive loans, for the payment of which his most valuable revenues are pledged, and year after year, these are sacrificed to his inability to meet the annual demand. I have heard it confidently estimated that, adopting the past as a criterion, in the space of thirteen years, the resources of the government will be absorbed; and if the ability of the governed to support taxation, at that juncture, is not better than at present, there is no conceivable means of furnishing an adequate supply to sustain the papal credit.* But it is highly probable that another and more rapid agency than the slow depreciation of the treasury will, ere then, have permanently altered the political condition, not only of Rome, but of all Italy.

The degeneracy of modern Rome is a subject ever forced upon the thoughtful resident, whenever his mind is free to revert to the local and moral circumstances by which he is surrounded. And to one who is in anywise familiar with her past history, or susceptible to her present influences, it becomes an almost absorbing theme. Vainly, at times, do the glories of the Vatican allure him; their delightful enchantments fade

* Tosti, the present treasurer general, is said to have administered the financial department so successfully as to have met the annual exigencies, made up the deficit of the past year, and retained a surplus.

before a more impressive reality. He cannot rejoice unreservedly in the splendors of human art, when humanity is a wreck around him; he cannot indulge in stirring retrospection over the sculptured figure of an old Roman, while it serves but to render more prominent the moral deformity of his descendant. And if a gleam of native enthusiasm excite him, caught from scenes which the supremacy of character has hallowed, or a sentiment of rich gratification steals over him from the midst of material beauty, the idea which he most loves to connect with these—the idea of his race—brings with it an overpowering sadness. Throughout all that art or antiquity here unfolds, he feels as if wandering in a beautiful garden, once blest with a presence which shall know it no more. He feels, in his inmost soul, that it was this non-existent object of his love, which lent a hitherto unknown interest to the marble and canvass, to mount and river; and while ever and anon their silent beauty affords a sad pleasure, they oftener serve but to remind him of the grave which has closed over the beloved of his memory.

Yet he gradually derives consolation, which sometimes brightens into happiness, in attaching himself to such mementos; and when they recall most strongly what has been, the thought of what yet may be brings home an exquisite and almost forgotten delight. While melancholy even

imparts its sad hue to the moral observer of Rome's relics and ruins, something of hope, of instinctive anticipation, bears out the mental gratification which ever flows from them.

FLORENCE.

“Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
Her corn and wine and oil, and Plenty leaps
To laughing life with her redundant horn ;
Along the banks, where smiling Arno sweeps,
Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,
And buried Learning rose, redeemed to a new morn.”

THE prevalence of broad sweeping vales, thickly studded with olive trees, and relieved by a background of snow-covered mountains, uniquely embosoming a picturesque city, through the midst of which a river courses, spanned by several finely arched bridges, clearly assures us that we are in the delightful capital of the garden of Italy, as Tuscany is appropriately called. A merely conventional view of Florence inspired me with a strong predilection for it as a residence. It possesses that medium character as regards extent, population and activity, which is essential to the comfort of those who would find in their place of abode a moderate degree of liveliness, combined with something of quietude and beauty. Its compactness, and its broadly paved

streets, and the general magnitude and antique cast of its buildings, are features which almost immediately prepossess the visitor.

One cannot wander long in Florence, without coming out upon the Piazza Grand Duca. This square seems to possess something of the local interest of the Edinburgh grass-market, as described by Sir Walter Scott—not that peculiar events transpire there, but the place is a kind of central resort, the post office and custom house being there situated, and that curious specimen of Tuscan architecture called the Palazzo Vecchio. There, too, stand the colossal and time-hallowed figures sculptured by Buonarotti: seen at night, how mystic their snowy distinctness! The illuminated figures upon the old tower designate, at that season, the hour, and a solitary sentinel standing in the shade of the buildings, with the equestrian statue of Cosmo in the centre, completes the romanticity of the scene. In the daytime, a far more bustling appearance is presented—groups awaiting the sorting of the mails, venders crying at their scattered booths, and, most unique of all, a quack mounted upon his *câleche*, eulogizing his nostrums most eloquently.

The view from the Boboli gardens attached to the ducal palace, is thus graphically described by a celebrated English poet:

“You see below Florence, a smokeless city, with its domes and spires occupying the vale, and beyond, to the right, the Apennines, whose

base extends even to the walls, and whose summits are intersected by ashen-colored clouds. The green valleys of these mountains, which gently unfold themselves upon the plain, and the intervening hills, covered with vineyards and olive plantations, are occupied by the villas, which are, as it were, another city—a Babylon of palaces and gardens. In the midst of the picture rolls the Arno, through woods bounded by the aerial snowy summits of the Apennines. On the right, a magnificent buttress of lofty craggy hills, overgrown with wilderness, juts out into many shapes over a lonely valley, and approaches the walls of the city.

“Cascini and other villages occupy the pinnacles and abutments of these hills, over which is seen, at intervals, the ethereal mountain line, hoary with snow and intersected by clouds. The valley below is covered with cypress groves, whose obeliskine forms of intense green pierce the gray shadow of the wintry hills that overhang them. The cypresses, too, of the garden, form a magnificent fore-ground of accumulated verdure: pyramids of dark green shining cones, rising out of a mass, between which are cut, like caverns, recesses conducting into walks.”

At no great distance we find the Museum of Natural History, the anatomical preparations of which are probably unsurpassed for their complete and scientific exhibition of the several parts and processes of the human system. Here the

body seems literally laid open, its nerves, glands and muscles represented in their natural positions, relations, hues and functions; and all with a regularity of arrangement, and displaying a perfection in the execution truly admirable. Means of studying nature, in so important a department, more comprehensive and withal commodious, can scarcely be imagined. Admiration of the skill of the artist, and an agitating sense of the wonderful delicacy and mysterious science involved in our physical being alternately occupy the beholder.

The Mausoleum and Chapel Tomb of the Medici are remarkable objects of attention. The latter is hallowed by the immortal work of M. Angelo which it contains, and the former is yet in the progress of construction, and although very rich in marbles and precious stones, possesses too sombre a hue, with its present incumbrances, to show these to much advantage.

Within the palace is a magnificent range of apartments appropriated to the fine arts, through which we are privileged, by the liberal courtesy so striking to the stranger in Tuscany, unreservedly to wander. They are adorned above with the most splendid frescos illustrative of the Iliad, beneath by brilliantly polished floors, while around, in gorgeous profusion, are various and admired paintings. The chief distinction of this collection seems to consist in the remarkable paucity of ordinary works amid such a multitude.

There are few which indicate vast genius, or inspire overpowering sentiments, but many which, from their intrinsic beauty or excellence of execution, form delightful sources of contemplative pleasure.

But the grand object which lends a most attractive charm to the city, is its far-famed gallery of art, containing, besides innumerable paintings, many original works of ancient sculpture. Day after day may the resident here frequent this elegant and instructive resort, until it becomes to him a familiar retreat, where much of his daily happiness is experienced, and many of his best thoughts suggested. Here, were this my home, would many of my best friends be; for who can fail to have his favorite paintings, as well as his much loved walks, or most admired authors? And who that values the objects and agencies around him in proportion to their improving influences, can withstand the sentiment of sympathy inspired by the long study and nurtured love of art's happiest products. How many delightful hours may one pass in that little *sanctum* of art—the Tribune, gazing upon its presiding goddess, and basking in the radiated expression of its pictured glories! Often, while seated in the circular chair opposite the celebrated statue of the Knife-grinder, I could not but reflect upon the position as superior to any which mere wealth or station could boast. For if the end chiefly attainable from both these is enjoyment, assur-

edly the rich little apartment I temporarily occupied evolves from its beautiful treasures sufficient pleasurable inspiration to delight every worthy capacity of happiness, such as is derivable from outward objects. Specification and especial comment in regard to the paintings in the Gallery and Palace of Florence becomes less and less practicable, as the sojourner repeats and lengthens his visits. The works of Raphael, Titian, Morillo and Salvator, distinctive as they are, become to the studious observer more and more instinct with an inspiration over which he loves to ponder, but which seldom "wreaks itself upon expression."

Standing amid the renowned sculptured group of Niobe and her children, I could indeed discover maternal sadness in the fixed countenance of the former, yet at the first view, it seemed wanting in that excited, agonized grief which the occasion would naturally induce. Perhaps, however, the expression more justly is that of placid and utterly despairing sorrow. The matronly form, the manner in which the mother's arm protects her clinging babe, the fine natural positions of the children—none can behold without admiration; nor, I think, without wishing that the whole group was better disposed for exhibiting the scene so vaguely indicated by the severed and regularly placed figures.

At the extremity of the gallery are two statues by Donatello—John the Baptist in the Wilder-

ness, and David. In viewing the former, one must admit its excellence as an artificial representation of an attenuated human form; but few can restrain a feeling of impatience in viewing it as the image it is designed to exhibit. In the successful attempt to delineate a victim of famine, all trace of devotion and benignity is lost. In this, as in other instances, the subject of regret is, that the artist had not been satisfied with executing a fine imitation of nature, instead of aiming, at the same time, at representing a great character. Michael Angelo's Christ would not so often disappoint, were it known by another name. It is the nature of man to associate with names corresponding ideas; and he mars not a little the completeness of his fame, who is prone to connect with the emanations of his genius or industry, the added attraction of a title which is, in itself, calculated to excite great expectations. That title will anticipate the work itself in reputation; and hence the notions of the multitude will be proportionably raised. It is highly interesting to peruse the various, and, for the most part, strongly marked countenances in the Portrait Gallery. These likenesses comprise authentic delineations of the master painters. Those of Titian, Vandyke and Perugini particularly arrested my attention.

In the Corsini Palace, several sketches by Salvator; a powerful modern work—the Death of Priam; a very pretty one—the Corsini Children;

two Dutch portraits, finished up with a dreadful fidelity to nature; Carlo Dolci's *Poesia*, and a drawing by Raphael, are the most interesting works in the extensive collection. Of late productions of art at present to be seen in this city, few interested me more than those of Bartolini, the most celebrated, and in some respects the best of modern sculptors. The statue of Charity, with an infant asleep in her arms, and a boy receiving instruction at her feet, and a beautiful Priestess of Bacchus, still in the hands of the artist, most delighted me. I viewed also, with lively pleasure, a picture just completed by a young Florentine—the miracle of a mule refusing her proffered food, and falling upon her knees at the sight of St. Anthony bearing the host. Whatever may be thought of the subject, the execution is wonderful. The countenance of the covered heretic, for whose good the miracle is supposed to have been performed, expressing astonishment and conviction, the calm, self-possessed air of the saint, with the reverence and still devotion beaming from the attentive features of the surrounding crowd—all this is most feelingly conceived and depicted. The artist is but twenty years of age—one of a gifted family.

As the season of mildness and salubrity unfolds with the rapidity and luxuriance peculiar to southern Europe, the pleasures of pedestrianism and excursions into the vicinity are augmented. To gain the summit of Fiesole, the place of Cata-

line's encampment, and gaze from off the beautiful and cypress-decked esplanade in front of the old monastery there situated, upon the city beneath, and the snowy heights in the distance, or to thread the sunny path that skirts the river, becomes daily more delightful. The song of birds in the groves, the rustling of the bright lizards among the dead leaves, and the hum of insects in the warm air, are too spring-like not to excite, with their genial vivacity, the contemplative spirit. On these occasions, the converse of friendship would frequently and almost spontaneously die away before the subtle influence of awakening and teeming nature. Ever and anon we involuntarily paused to admire the beauty around. The river, presenting an increased body of water, rapidly purling along its wayward course—the opposite bank displaying its numerous and various trees, now becoming more deeply umbrageous and verdant—while, upon each hand, was that glorious object, the hoary mountain ranges, reflecting the scattered sun-light, and contrasting with the indented slopes—combined to form a landscape of peculiar cheerfulness and beauty.

It was on a day like this that I extended my acquaintance with the environs of the city, much beyond the limits to which previous excursions had carried me. After six miles of riding, we reached Pratolino, a villa of the Grand Duke, and perambulated its park-like grounds, the wooded parts of which forcibly reminded me of Mount

Auburn. Here we viewed a most colossal statue, composed of brick, plaster-work and stone, which, from its awful size and muscular development, presents a mammoth rather than a truly sublime object. The fountain designed to flow over it was quite dry. The figure is human, and in a sitting posture. We went through the ceremony of ascending and entering the enormous head of this monstrous result of the labors of Giovanni di Bologna. The old *lacquey de place* who accompanied us promised to point out his country house on the road; and when we were passing a broad plain having a large cross in the centre, declared that to be the "home in the country" to which he confidently expected to retire. It was the public burying-ground. Thus spoke he of the last resting place of his body; and in his habit and easy manner of sustaining the mortal coil, I recognized one of those peculiar philosophers of whom Goldsmith so often and so charmingly speaks.

The last week of Carnival, although unmarked by the extravagant festivities which attract the stranger multitude at the seat of Catholicism, is yet sufficiently prolific of amusement. The *Lung' Arno*, as the street bordering the river is called, is thronged; and the occasional appearance of a party of maskers, and especially that of a gilded and painted vehicle, filled with a band of choristers dressed in the Chinese fashion, evidences a gala time. The Grand Duke's equi-

page, consisting of several carriages drawn by four horses richly caparisoned, with gaudy outriders, adds to the passing show. A *Festa di Ballo* is the favorite evening diversion. The extensive floor of one of the large theatres is covered with people of various orders, the number of maskers being generally small in proportion to the whole assembly. Most of the females wear large black silk dominos and half masks. A few gay and comical disguises appear amid the throng; and most of the time three or four sets of waltzers are footing it away in various parts of the building. There is far less of genuine humor than I had looked for, and a small display of taste in the costumes. Most of the maskers, in their silent glidings to and fro, seemed convened rather for intrigue than mere pastime. Indeed the practice, when not evidently made use of as a source of mirth, or successful in producing that effect, is too intrinsically sinister to please those unaccustomed to it. I can readily imagine a masquerade in France as a very gay, amusing, and perhaps pleasing spectacle; but if this be a specimen of this form of diversion in Italy, I can only say that it possesses, in my view, little comparative attraction. The Chiesa di St. Giovanni is splendidly arrayed in tapestry, and brilliantly illuminated. The inspiring solos and choruses, with the deep responses of the assembled multitude, and the grand instrumental harmony, formed a scene more impressive and

interesting than the combined pleasures of the Carnival.

Among the by-way mirth observable at this mirthful season, one instance struck me as quite unique. A man wearing a military chapeau stood upon an inverted basket, at a corner, with an outstretched arm and a fixed eye, immovable as a statue. The joke consisted in his perfect immobility, amid the jeers and questionings of an eager group. In the midst of a warm debate, whether the figure was artificial or human, the support was removed from beneath his feet, and the hero of the scene joined in the merriment, the source of which was so essentially the product of Florentine wit. A few days after, I saw a multitude convened to witness a sadder but equally characteristic spectacle. In front of the singular old prison of Florence, three criminals were exposed, having upon their breasts large placards indicating their names, ages and crimes. They had been condemned to the galleys for three years, and the bell had assembled a curious crowd to gaze upon their wretchedness, and witness their transportation.

On a fine afternoon, we visited Prato, a manufacturing town ten miles distant, for the purpose of witnessing a religious procession which occurs there once in three years, and is deemed one of the most imposing in Italy. Having passed two or three hours in roaming about the streets, amid the dense crowds assembled to behold the cere-

monial, about dusk we took the station previously obtained for us, being one compartment of the rough and somewhat elevated galleries which lined the way. The houses were illuminated, and the strong light falling upon two tiers of spectators arranged on either side, gave to the scene a remarkable effect. First in the procession, (designed in observance of the death of our Saviour,) came a large cavalcade, habited as the ancient Roman soldiers, the leaders wearing rich mantles and dark-plumed helmets; then a considerable body of infantry; then a band of musicians clad in black. After these appeared an immense number of laymen bearing torches, and followed by boys, priests and marshals; and then were borne successively, all the emblems of our Saviour's sufferings, and, inscribed upon banners, his words during the crucifixion; after all, preceded by a large choir of priests, and surrounded by torch-bearers, appeared the image of the dead Jesus, over which was carried a large black canopy; then came the Madonna, more music, another cavalcade of soldiery, and files of citizens closed the procession. As this was the first ceremonial of the kind I had witnessed, my interest was considerably excited. It certainly was well calculated to induce its destined influence. The combined effect of such a solemn moving pageant, and the gazing multitude, revealed to the sight by the flickering glare of a hundred torches; the profound stillness which

reigned, broken only by an occasional murmur, the deep tones of the chanters, or the measured strains of the instruments; the view, under such circumstances, of the symbols of the sufferings of Him who, on that day, centuries past, was borne mournfully and quietly to the sepulchre—all came most touchingly and with an awful and solemn distinctness upon the mind.

Among the curious ceremonies of the holy week, observed in Florence, is that called the *Columbina*. At mid-day, the figure of a small dove is made, by fire-works, to glide rapidly along a large wire, from the main altar of the Cathedral, through the principal entrance to the other side of the street, where it comes in contact with a magazine of squibs lodged in a massive carved block or pillar, thence producing gradual but continued explosions. This phenomenon, although its effect is unaided by the darkness of night, is eagerly viewed by an immense populace filling the large square and adjacent balconies and windows. What its religious signification is I cannot precisely determine. The first fire is said to be communicated from a holy flint; i. e. a small fragment of the tomb of Christ; and the *contadini* attach great importance to the manner in which the dove executes her mission, not indeed a very peaceful one. Should her passage be uninterrupted, and the desired effect be produced, a favorable season for the crops is inferred; if, on the other hand, mismanagement causes a fail-

ure, the contrary event is sadly presaged. On this occasion, the whole affair went off well. It was regarded with much apparent interest—an interest, indeed, which nothing but the character of the people and the force of popular superstitions can explain.

The opera of *Norma* is rife with the beautiful music of Bellini, and the graceful poetry of Felice Romano. The first representation here was attended by an immense assemblage, and listened to with singular attention, from the fact that during the last autumn it was performed on the same stage, with a German lady as *prima donna*, with what was believed to be an unequalled degree of success.

The plot of this opera represents the Druids in Gaul, whose orgies are urged to the downfall of the Romans, who, under a proconsul, are occupying this ancient seat of their rites; and is said to have a hidden meaning, and to be allegorically significant of the abuse of monastic institutions, and the downfall of the church, for which reason it was prohibited in Rome under its original name, and before being presented there, received essential modifications. *Norma* is high priestess, her father high priest, and *Adalgisa* a young *ministra* in the temple. The young Roman officer woos and wins *Norma*, and afterwards is in love with *Adalgisa*. At length, being taken in the very act of spying upon the Druidical rites, he is condemned to death, when *Norma* declares

her apostacy, and glories to die upon the same pile with her faithless but repentant lover. This outline is most boldly sketched and interestingly filled up in the opera. The moving scenes are those in which the infidelity of the proconsul is discovered, where Norma makes a vain attempt to kill her offspring—her interview with Adalgisa—the last with Pollione, and that in which she implores her father's forgiveness, and commits her children to his care. The choruses are remarkably fine, and the dresses, particularly of the females, quite picturesque. In Norma's first ministration at the altar, there is a hymn addressed to the moon, the most touching piece of vocalism I have heard.

Casta Diva, che inargenti
Queste sacre antiche piante,
A noi volgi il bel sembiante
Senza nube e senza vel.
Tempra tu de' cori ardenti,
Tempra ancor lo zelo audace,
Spargi in terra quella pace
Che regnar tu fai nel ciel.
A noi volgi il bel sembiante
Senza nube e senza vel.

For pathos, vigor of acting, and strong moral expression, the consummation of the plot in this opera, as developed by vocal and dramatic talents of a high order, is unsurpassed. When the young and gallantly arrayed Roman is brought before the Druidical assembly, to answer to the

charge of haunting their sacred groves, he sees Norma for the first time since, on the detection of his estrangement, she overwhelmed him with indignant reproaches. And now, when the avenging steel is raised to destroy him, she solicits her unsuspecting parent to allow her a private interview with the culprit, as it were to search into the motives of his sacrilege. The brilliant temple is deserted by all but the proconsul and her he has injured. He quailed not before the angry multitude, nor at the threatening weapon; but the eloquent eye of Norma thrills him with awe. I can scarcely imagine a more commanding dramatic representation of woman's dignity and power under the sense of injury, than is displayed in the majestic mien and sternly beaming countenance of Norma, as with the oak leaf garland upon her head, her long dark hair falling over white habiliments, and her symmetrical arms quite bare and braceleted with gold, she pauses before the awe-struck Roman, and gazing as if to read his soul and torture with the gaze—breaks the spell of a long and solemn silence with the deeply chanted words—

In mia mano alfin tu sei.

In the duet between Norma and Adalgisa, where they mingle their saddened spirits and mourn together—the one for love unreturned, the

other for love to be renounced—every note of the gamut is run up with a precision and melody truly astonishing. And the last duet between the former and Pollione, when, by her voluntary self-sacrifice, the greatness of her character is revealed to him, and his affection is renewed only to cheer her dreadful doom, is melting beyond description.

NOR.—Qual cor tradisti, qual cor perdesti
Quest' ora orrenda ti manifesti.
Da te fuggire tentasti invano ;
Crudel Romano, tu sei con me.
Un nume, un fato di te più forte
Ci vuole uniti in vita e in morte.
Sul rogo istesso che mi divora,
Sotterra ancora sarò con te.

POL.—Ah! troppo tardi t'ho conosciuta—
Sublime donna, io t'ho perduta.—
Col mio rimorso è amor rinato,
Più disperato, furente egli è.
Moriame insieme, ah ! sì, moriamo ;
L'estremo accento sarà ch' io t' amo,
Ma tu morendo non m' abborrire
Pria de morire perdona a me.

In a word, I have seen no opera which combines so much that is interesting, and frequently sublime ; and wonder not that in a country so imaginative and musical as this, and with such unrivalled performers, it should be so universally popular. In this, the city of its origin, the Italian opera seems to exist in singular perfection, and

its votaries to evince a peculiar and discriminating enthusiasm.*

It is not the intensity, but the peculiar chilliness of the mountain wind, which renders winter formidable here. The difference of temperature, at that season, between the open country and in the full influence of the sun, and that of the narrow streets, is almost incredible. Hence the period of nature's renovation is not less welcome than in colder climes. And when the ceremonies of the holy week were over, and the season, deemed the finest in Florence, at length palpably evinced itself, the mass of travellers returned thither, on their way northward. There is something to me singularly inconsistent in this mechanical driving way of seeing Italy. Of all countries it requires especial study, and calm habitual attention, to develope its resources. There is, indeed, a kind of pleasure, to one in good health and easily amused, in flying from place to place, constantly seeking new objects, and exhausting none. But this is surely a mere negative enjoyment. The individual *thus* intent upon self-gratification, may find it elsewhere, and by other means. The peculiar satisfaction derivable in this land, to one of us denizens of the new, the active, the bustling world, is found in its quiet air, its contemplative spirit, in the imagina-

* Politiano is said to have originated the Italian opera, in his "Orfeo."

tive character of the amusements, in the calm impulse by which, under such circumstances, the current of existence is urged along. The pervading musical spirit of the Florentines seemed to break out anew as the genial season advanced, and no time were the opera airs, chanted by persons of almost every class, as they walk the streets at night, heard more frequently.

The Florentines, and indeed the Tuscans generally are, as far as my observation extended, the happiest Italians;—more liberally governed they certainly are. But the number of paupers and improvidents, even here, must strike an American visitor; and blindness, or affections of the eyes, are remarkably common. Yet the peculiar toll of the bell which calls out the *Misericordia* is comparatively seldom heard. This is an ancient institution, the members of which, at a certain summons, array themselves in sackcloth dominos, and hasten to execute whatever charitable office the occasion demands. The brethren are buried by the society, whose dark forms, bearing a body, sometimes glide fearfully upon the sight, their torches flickering in the noon-day light, and their measured tread echoing among the busy streets quite solemnly.

Although my early and favorable impressions of this city were confirmed, yet, in one respect, many are liable to disappointment. With the imaginative expectancy natural to the inexperienced, we may have pictured an inland Italian

city as a quiet spot, whose very air is redolent with the mellowness of age, and whose every object, from the lowly dwelling to the magnificent church, is rich in the interest of antiquity. Here, on the contrary, there is much which resembles what may be called the natural language of a modern metropolis. The constant cry of the venders, the hurrying to and fro of busy feet, the restlessness of trade, and the gaudy bustle of pleasure—all are here, and they break in too rudely upon the quiet beauty of the scene, antiquated as are some of its features, to permit of more than the occasional indulgence of that romantic illusion with which we are fain to tint the sterner outlines of reality. Yet there are times and aspects which carry the meditative into the region where they most delight to expatiate—the region of imaginative thought. The pleasure of a morning's lounge in the gallery of the Pitti, or the Tribune, of a retrospective hour in the holy precincts of St. Croce, above the “dust which makes them holier,” of a sunset view from the beautiful bridge of Santa Trinita, of an evening's walk along the Arno, of listening and gazing within the chaste walls of the Pergola—all this would seem tame in description, but in reality it is entrancing. It is, too, morally exciting, when the moon is careering high in the heavens, to walk around the spacious square of the Duomo, and look up at the Cathedral and beautiful greco-arabic *campanile* beside it, illuminated by a light so

in unison with their own dusky yet rich hues, so revealing to the mammoth proportions of the one, and the towering but simple elegance of the other. When the wide space around reflects no sound but the faint echo of a solitary pedestrian, standing in full view of such a grand and time-hallowed result of human art, and remembering how oft the same lonely orb has bathed in silver radiance the old dome and pinnacles—more faithful in the still tenderness of her nightly greetings than the evanescent and inconstant sentiment of man—the idea of Italy and her intellectual nobleness comes home like a realized dream to the heart.

NAPLES.

“ Naples, thou heart of men, which ever pantest
Naked beneath the lidless eye of heaven!
Elysian city, which to calm enchantest
The mutinous air and sea! they round thee, even
As sleep round Love, are driven!”

THE *câleche* which we took in the suburbs soon brought us in front of the high mound denominated Virgil's tomb. As my immediate arrangements precluded a minute inspection, I could only sigh at the discrepancy between the ideal and actual spot. Such *en passant* reflections were soon dissipated by the curious and antiquated scene in which we almost immediately found ourselves. This was no other than the Grotto of Posilipo, a cavern road, excavated so long ago that the date of the work is lost, through the high mount which divides Naples from Pozzuoli. We rode along this remarkable highway for the distance of half a mile. Its obscurity is only rendered more mysterious by the dim light of the lamps occasionally suspended upon the

sides, and the broad glare of day seen at either end, through the dark perspective.

A few moments' ride, after emerging, brought us upon the sea-side, along which the remainder of our course lay. Upon a jutting point appeared Pozzuoli, an ancient town, while the hill-side, skirting our road on the right, displayed strata of lava. Having discharged our conveyance, we proceeded to the old mole, considerable remnants of which still exist, and then hastened to the ruins of the temple of Jupiter Serapis. Three very lofty columns alone remain standing, but several large fragments lie scattered around. The remaining exterior walls clearly indicate the original dimensions and shape of the temple, which was evidently on the highest scale of magnificence. Indeed, no remain of this class presented to me such a literal ruin as this. More than a foot of water covers the extensive marble floor, which slimy weeds completely hide. A ring and several broken vessels are discoverable, denoting the sacrifices of which it has been the scene. One of the columnar fragments is eaten, in a most remarkable degree, by a species of insect—the incisions being as large as an augur-hole. Near the ruins are remains of sulphur, vapor and mineral baths.

Our attention was drawn to the amphitheatre—a ruin in excellent preservation. We were able to walk, for a long space, between the two walls, within which are the caves for wild beasts, and

exteriorly, the shape is discernible. The arena is covered with trees. They were destitute of verdure, and the intervening space, thickly sown with grain, the green shoots of which had already put forth from a soil doubtless fertilized with human blood, presented to the casual spectator anything rather than a spot where cruelty had often triumphed, and suffering been Romanly endured. The solfatura, or manufacture of sulphur and alum, from the native material, furnished yet another object in the vicinity. The process, from the absence of any considerable apparatus, is apparently very simple—probably little more than the melting and straining of the original substances, of which the surrounding hills are in a great measure composed. Where large excavations have been made, boiling springs have issued, the odor of which is tremendous. In many places, the ground beneath seemed hollow, and I fancied I heard volcanic rumblings.

Resuming our walk, we passed over the mountain-side, where there is a very rough, though somewhat worn path. The sun had just passed his meridian, and the heat and exercise soon produced considerable fatigue, so that we were glad to dine on the *campagna* bread and wine, in the cottage of a *contadina*. Having reached the Lake d'Agnano, and admired its placid beauty, we found it impossible to enter the *grotto del cane*, or see the experiment from which it derives its name, as the *custode*, like most of his neighbors,

had gone to enjoy the festa within the city. But I had seen enough of nature's gaseous operations for one day, and could too easily imagine this, to regret the accident of not witnessing it.

About an hour's rapid walking brought me once more to the grotto wood, through which I passed, and was again in Naples. Upon reaching the *chiaja*, the placid waters of the broad bay, the red streak upon Vesuvius, the busy, mingled and noisy crowd—all accorded with what I had read, and almost with what I had imagined of the city. Upon the square in front of the royal palace, the church of St. Francisco appeared, studded with small lights upon the top of the corridors, domes and cross. In a few moments, at a signal fired from below, far brighter and larger flames flashed up in the intervening spaces, exhibiting the statues in broad relief, and the square filled with an admiring populace. The Toledo, too, was crowded, and every house illuminated: it was the evening of the king's birth-day; and his seemingly happy subjects, of every class, rank and calling, were abroad and active.

The weather being very unpromising on the succeeding morning, I had determined to pass it within the city, as profitably as might be, and having visited several churches, and taken a glimpse of the large dull chambers of the court of justice, I entered the celebrated museum, which contains, among sundry other curiosities, the dis-

interred relics of another age and a by-gone people—the various articles rescued from Herculaneum and Pompeii. After inspecting the strange and frequently beautiful frescos, I entered the gallery of sculpture, and viewed the innumerable busts of heroic, political and philosophical characters collected there—the statues of emperors, of heathen divinities, of fabulous beings, of men venerated for ages for their virtues or wisdom, or “damned to fame” for their licentious use of temporary power. I found myself somewhat familiar with the forms and features of these personages, having become partially acquainted therewith during my visit to the other galleries of Italy. I was particularly delighted with a statue of Aristides, the position of which seems truly inimitable. It breathes the very spirit of that dignity which is founded solely upon moral pre-eminence. I gazed with interest upon the trophies from Egypt, the remarkable idols, the well preserved mummies, the labored hieroglyphics; and with wonder upon the bronzes, preserved, it is difficult to tell how, from the effect of a heat apparently intense enough to melt them into their original crude forms. Deeming this view of the lower halls sufficient for one day, and finding that the threatened sirocco was destined to be less formidable than I imagined, I left Naples, and in about two hours, was walking beneath the half obscure sky of a mild afternoon, through a city whose inhabitants vanished from the earth like a

mist, and whose glory, if glory consists in fame, results, not like that of other places, from the hallowing actions of mankind, but from the destructive operations of nature:—I was in Pompeii. With what feelings of curiosity and awe did I tread upon the very pavement where, two thousand years ago, hundreds of my fellow beings moved to and fro, with all the carelessness, the eagerness of pursuit, the selfishness of purpose, with which another race so long trod above their entombed habitations! Stripped as Pompeii is of those objects which rendered it, when first discovered, the greatest of wonders, the very sight of houses, shops, theatres and temples, broken and imperfect as they are, where ages ago this wonderful phenomenon of human existence was carried on, and its several elements sustained, even as at present—this is most wonderful, most exciting. We seem to know, as never before, that human nature has ever been the same—the same in its wants, if not the same in its resources. There are those who can witness the passing away of one of the myriads of men which people the earth, or stand among the congregated tombs of their kind, and yet feel no light shed upon the darkness of their scepticism, and doubt a better destiny for man, even over the gloomy consummation of his physical existence. But who can enter the living tomb of a civilized people, which has appeared, almost magically, after the lapse of centuries, and not yield, without resistance, to

its most eloquent teachings? Viewing the identical means of life, bodily and mental, that were wrought by an extinct race for the gratification of their native propensities, and computing the degree of thought, the exercise of sentiment here unfolded, can any one believe that the fiery masses which failed to destroy these conventional means, palsied in oblivion the energies that created them?

Pompeii, its history, the particulars of its disinterment, the objects it presents, are familiar to the mind of almost every one. We can scarcely hope, in its present state, to do more than realize our abstract ideas concerning it. One impression the observant visitor of this day cannot but carry away; and that is, that its yet undiscovered treasures will exceed all that the past has unfolded.

Under favorable auspices, I commenced moving, upon a donkey, from the village of Resina towards Vesuvius, through a kind of lane choked up with earth and stones. Two hours of slow riding brought me to the first elevation, where stands a cottage called the Hermitage, inhabited by an old monk, and affording shelter to the guards upon the mountain. My course became then confined to a mule-path, so much impeded by the heavy masses of lava, that none but the experienced animal I bestrode could have made a way along its rough and broken surface. I was soon upon a vast plain of crude black lava,

thrown into a thousand accidental forms, and presenting a wide scene of utter desolation. At the foot of Vesuvius, properly so called, I left the animal, and commenced climbing the steep ascent. Being obliged to tread solely upon the craggy projections or small fragments of the lava, and sometimes upon ashes only, the process proved exceedingly fatiguing. Although in part sustained by the guide, by means of the horse's bridle, I was several times obliged to sit down upon some projecting point, and collect breath for a fresh effort. Proceeding thus, I at length reached the comparatively level space immediately below the uppermost elevation. Here, as I advanced towards the new crater, the crackling of the porous masses, and the bellowing of the smoke-pouring summit, were sufficiently appalling. Occasionally the boiling sulphur was seen oozing from some little crevice, and the surface which sustained my wayward footsteps, seemed about to fall beneath them.

I approached near enough to the new crater to inhale the sulphurous exhalations, and become sensible of its potent heat. In its immediate vicinity, where the outer crust was broken, and the liquid flames roaring and bursting through the aperture, several peasants were moulding the glowing lava into coarse medallions, as coolly as if at work over a forge. Having breathed the suffocating air, and roamed over the heated scorixæ, as long as prudence permitted, I began to

retrace my steps. My passage down the mountain was wonderfully expeditious, as I almost slid upon the fine ashes, and had only to guard against falling. During the descent, and from the summit, the view was surprisingly beautiful, comprising a complete panorama of Naples, its unrivalled bay and adjacent villages.

Being again favored with a remarkably fine day for the season, I retraced my course to Pozzuoli, and continued along the sea until I reached the Lucrine Lake, which is so near the water's edge that a small connecting canal has been formed across the road. Dismounting, I walked around this calm and apparently shallow sheet of water, then threaded a pleasant winding path, which finally brought me to the lake of Avernus, upon the banks of which is the Sybil's cave. I inspected, with an attention which the scenery itself never would have elicited, the scene so minutely described by Virgil, and said to have suggested his idea of the infernal regions. I next stopped at the ruins of Nero's villa, and especially observed the vapor-baths below, formed by the sea-water, heated by the volcanic elements beneath the bank, and thence sending up volumes of saline and sulphureous steam. Through several crevices this vapor escapes exteriorly, but its chief outlet is into what originally constituted the subterraneous apartments of the villa.

Continuing rapidly on our way to Baia, I descended into the old dungeons of a Roman prison,

and visited the antique, arched and labored reservoir in its vicinity. I was thus soon in view of a large expanse of water, separated from the Mediterranean by a narrow and marshy fen, and bounded on the right by a slightly declining hill, partially cultivated—the Stygian lake and Elysian fields of the great Mantuan! A promontory stretching into the sea, and forming, in conjunction with the land on which I stood, a small bay, is the port Misenum. The paths leading to these sites, together forming the whole landscape so minutely described in the *Eneid*, were worn by the pilgrimages of travellers. The very children of the village knew my purpose, and verbosely designated the localities. What an indirect but indisputable testimony is this to truths which many are fain theoretically to deny. Many a hill and vale, many an extent of water and tract of cultivated land of surpassing beauty, lies unadmired amid the vastness of our continent; and yet these localities, even when bereft of the flowery accompaniments of spring, and undecked with the golden splendors of autumn, are lingered over by devotees of every country with an interest and sentiment that nature's highest glories fail to inspire. And all this because an ancient and beautiful poet was wont to wander there, and is thought thence to have derived many of his descriptive ideas. In truth, where the master spirits of the earth have been, or whatever spots their recorded thoughts have hallowed, there is

ever after an unfailing attraction to beings of a like nature.

Returning, I examined the octangular brick-work remain of the temple of Venus, and the more perfect remnant of that of Neptune. Baia and its vicinity were evidently favorite resorts of the old Romans. Everywhere the foundations of a wall, the archway of a subterranean apartment, or a broken and crude mass of plastered brick-work, denote the former existence of extensive buildings. The Cumæan amphitheatre and lava-paved road were passed on my way to Naples. The lovely and expansive view from the garden above Virgil's tomb, an excursion in the beautiful bay, and a few walks amid the gaudiness, bustle and beggary of the city, completed my experiences here. It is only in the environs that we find that tranquil classic scenery for which Italy is renowned. There, when balmy weather prevails, every object breathes the quiet and picturesque influence of antiquated art and hallowed nature.

I had threaded the ever-bustling street of the Toledo, and satiated, for the time being, my passion for observation, in glancing at the motley specimens of humanity so characteristic of the over-populated cities of Europe. The splendid equipages of wealth, hard pressed by the low carts of the market venders; the gaily-accounted exquisites of the metropolis; the coarsely clad peasant; the maimed and wo-begone mendicant; the buffoons and the soldiery; the dark-robed

priest and the bewildered stranger, combine to render this a scene unequalled for the contrasts it presents, and the sounds of which it is redolent. These contrasts I had gazed upon till the eye and the heart were alike weary; these sounds I had endured till their deafening noise was insupportable; and entering the *Coronna di Ferro*, a *trattoria*, renowned for its beef-steaks served up *a la mode Anglais*, I prepared to discuss mine, and eschew, for a while, the ceaseless confusion of the grand *strada*.

My neighbor at the table proffered a kindly word, and I turned to mark him. He was a young man of graceful mien, with the dark eloquent eye of the country, and his pale complexion and expression of thoughtful intelligence betokened an intellectual character. "*Voi siete Inglese, Signor?*" he inquired. "No," I replied, "*Sono Americano*;"—at the word his eye brightened, and a sentiment of romantic interest seemed to excite him. He spoke enthusiastically of Washington and Franklin, and insisted upon an adjournment to his lodgings. I found him to be a Sicilian by birth, and a poet by profession. He was very curious to learn the extent of the liberty of the press in America; and when informed, was in alternate raptures and dejection: the idea of such freedom transported him, but the thought of his own political relations soon subdued and saddened his spirit. He struck his hand despondingly upon a pile of manuscripts, the publication

of which the censors had prohibited, on the ground of their liberality of sentiment. Pacing the room, and exclaiming enthusiastically at my descriptions, the poor bard seemed ready to throw himself into the first vessel which could convey him from a land so favorable to the inspiration, and inimical to the development of the divine art. I was interested in the expedient he had adopted to gratify his restricted muse. He was deep in the study of Natural History, and was devoting himself to the poetical illustration of this subject, reserving visions of liberty for the especial subjects of his *unwritten* poetry. Upon parting, I gave him a volume of selections from Byron, as he was studying the English tongue: he pressed the *bello regalo* to his heart, and promising to write, embraced me, and we parted.



VENICE.

“ Queen of cities !

Goddess of ocean ! with the beauty crowned
Of Aphrodite from her parent deep !
If thine Ausonian heaven denies the strength
That nerves a mountain race of sterner mould,
It gives thee charms whose very softness wins
All hearts to worship.”

EARLY on the day succeeding my arrival in Venice, I was lolling upon the cushioned seats, and beneath the little dark awning of a gondola, and was thus carried along through numberless canals ; the stroke of the oar, and occasional salutation of the gondolier alone breaking upon the impressive quietness. Passing by the old and seemingly deserted habitations which line the less public ways, I silently but thoughtfully contemplated the surrounding scene. One moment gliding beneath one of the many short but massive bridges, another sailing noiselessly under a window whence some listless observer was gazing, now coming almost in contact with a passing

gondola, and again occupying the solitary waters of a minor course. The steps and lower portions of the buildings, green with humid vegetation, the mouldering walls, the sad repose of neglect, and the palpable evidences of time's corroding finger, were circumstances too unique not to be observed, and too interesting to be unimpressive.

I was introduced by the *custode* of the Tribunal of Justice, upon the Bridge of Sighs—the lofty and covered archway connecting the prison and palace. I found it an exceedingly massive structure, consisting of two passages, the two entrances communicating with the general prison, and one of the two leading into the palace being closed up. By examining the locality, I soon perceived the error which has been justly ascribed to Byron, that of supposing that a passage from the palace to the prison was a fatal path. On the contrary, he who was so happy as to escape the condemnation of “the Ten,” was acquitted, or remanded to his former cell, instead of being consigned by the private stair-case to the secret dungeons beneath. Hence to him, in either case, the path was joyful rather than sad. Well, however, may such a heavy and short way between the tribunal and the jail be called the *Ponte di Sospiri*; for it must full often have re-echoed the heavy sighs of innumerable sufferers. Descending by the golden stairs, so called, I was guided to the awful prisons beneath, and examined the rude inscriptions and bloody stains still existent

in the gloomy vaults, so long the secret scenes of suffering and destruction.*

Landing near the church of St. Georgio Maggiore, I admired, for some time, its architectural neatness and simple grandeur. Next proceeding to the Chiesa di Carmelitani, I was much interested in examining the numerous precious marbles which line its interior. Much time was consumed in viewing some of the most important churches, and in perusing the peculiar architecture of many of the crumbling and blackened palaces bordering the main canal. I remarked that the former edifices were much lighter, and the marbles more vivid than is the case with most of the churches, out of Lombardy, which I had previously seen. In one of these I was interestingly occupied in viewing the monument to Canova; one of the sculptured figures which adorn it carries an urn containing the heart of the great artist. The Academy of the Fine Arts engaged much of my attention. In what has been called Titian's master-piece—the Assumption, there seemed to me exceeding richness without corresponding effect; but in the Marriage of Cana, by Pardaronino, I deemed the countenance of the bride one of the most beautiful faces I had seen

* As we crossed the square of St. Marks, we remarked that the pigeons did not fly hastily at our approach, and remembered with interest, that they were privileged natives of the place, having been, during and since the republic, under the special protection of government.

upon canvass, with the exception of several of Raphael's Madonnas.

The more I saw of this peculiar school of painting called Venetian, the more was I captivated with its unrivalled richness and depth of coloring, and the more regretful of its frequent lack of powerful expression. This latter quality seems pre-eminently requisite for the production of anything like permanent impression upon the mind of the spectator. When I recall some of Raphael's works, the sentiment embodied in the picture is before me, and strongly identified with his unequalled images; but even after a comparatively short interval, many of the larger pictures of the Venetian school were merged, in my imagination, in the splendor of their own gorgeous hues.

I next disembarked at the Rialto, interesting from its Shakspearian associations. Alas! no rich Venetian merchants are now to be seen upon its still bustling walk, though every traveller will find something of the Shylock spirit lingering yet. A subsequent object was the Arsenal, where the antique statues before the entrance, the various instruments of war and torture, and the models of the old barques, proved quite curious, and worthy of attention. Several fettered workmen, prisoners, passed to and fro in the extensive yards, and the appearance of active business was striking for this part of the world.

I walked through the lower hall, and up the deserted stair-case of the Palazzo Barbarigo, with a sentiment of melancholy sympathy for the changes which time and events have wrought within and without it. Here are the very rooms which were graced with the presence of a venerable ancestry of Venetian nobles, which had been the home of a Doge, the studio where some of Titian's best efforts were completed, and the final scene of his being. Long did I sit in the front room, in one of the old gilded chairs, gazing upon his Venus and Magdalene, but especially up at the weeping, yet lovely countenance of the latter, looming upon the air through the encrustment of three hundred years of time and neglect. I turned, too, frequently, to look upon the painting of his daughter in the embrace of a Satyr, and that member of the illustrious family who patronized his young genius, and whom he has so graphically depicted in his ducal cap. The old Turkey carpet beneath my feet, the ancient portraiture around me, the musty odor of the apartment, and the deep quiet which prevailed, forced me to feel that I was indeed in the palace of an old Venetian, and that this very room had echoed the voice and witnessed the anxious labors of one of the most admired of the old masters.

I proceeded to a scene of observation anticipated with feelings much more deep than had been aroused by other similar expectancies. I was about to enter an aged and peculiar fabric,

around which some of the strongest associations of the place are clustered. In Rome there is great generality in the spontaneous interest with which we regard her antiquities. Here an individual action, and there a remarkable event, hallows the locality or the architectural fragment. One may have his favorite scene of history, or select from the scattered mass a single object; but the principle in human nature, which is the true spring of enjoyment in such observations—the principle of association—is linked with the whole site of an ancient city's greatness and decline; and the Forum, Coliseum, Tombs, Pillars and works of art, while they realize more perfectly the local ideas of the observer, do not, for that reason, dissever them from their general object—from Rome as a whole. But here, there is one comparatively small, and therefore intensely interesting point, where are concentrated the various historical associations, from the brightest to the most mournful; there is one scene teeming with the dream-like memory of that peculiar government, and of those thrilling events, which render the very idea of Venice so richly attractive to the imagination and the heart.

And upon this spot I stood, amid these shadowers forth of the past. The dark gothic form of the Ducal Palace was before me, and I slowly entered the main portal, ascended the marble stairs, and was upon the very spot where the successive Doges of the republic were crowned, and where

Marino Faliero was decapitated; before me the richly wrought marble gallery of the Senate, and at my right, the apertures to which the lions' heads were attached, into whose extended jaws so many fatal messages of destruction were dropped. I thought of the grave, richly robed forms of the Venetian Fathers; of the trembling hands and wandering glances of the anonymous accusers; of the gay peopling of those silent corridors on the day when the new Doge entered upon his office; of the happy, yet dignified bearing of the patriarchs themselves, when they were thus ushered into the highest station of the republic; of the sad sternness of the old war-stricken soldier, who died ignominiously where his fairest laurel was won; of his young and despairing wife, and of the outcry of the impatient multitude at the gate—

“ Slave, do thine office !
Strike as I struck the foe ! Strike as I would
Have struck those tyrants ! Strike deep as my curse ;
Strike—and but once ! ”

A few moments elapsed, and I was within the Grand Council Chamber, upon the immense walls of which are pictured, in tints which time has only mellowed, some of the most illustrious incidents in Venetian history. There they are, enclosed in heavy, rich gilding, as when the wise men of a free and victorious city looked to them for inspiration. Above are hung the portraits of

the long line of Doges, exhibiting scarcely a face which does not bear marks of strong mind and venerable experience. Here, too, is the gloomy interruption to the singular corps—the black veil and its sad inscription—*hic est locus Marini Falieri decapitati per crimine*. I tarried successively in the chamber where were wont to convene the Senate, the Councils of the Ten and the Forty, and the reception-room for ambassadors, even the seats of which remained unviolated but by decay. In the second, while studying the paintings, a bat fluttered to and fro among the cornices—a fit living concomitant of such a scene. Here, too, the line of portraiture is again broken, not by any insignia of crime, but by that of abrupt cessation, the places prepared for succeeding Doges presenting but a void.

An hour's gondola sailing brought me to St. Lazarus, a pretty island about two miles from Venice; and my application to view the very interesting convent there situated, was very politely received by one of the venerable and worthy brotherhood, Padre Pascal, who, in his dark robes and long gray beard, looked like, what indeed he may justly be called, a moral apostle of learning. Under his kind and intelligent conduct I viewed this delightful institution; the lovely and tranquil situation of which, the neatness and order displayed in its interior arrangements, and the works of useful and happy influence going unassumingly on within its consecrated walls,

attracted my earnest sympathy and respect. In the beautiful library I found books in all languages, and a fine bust of the founder of the institution, by Canova. At the table upon which this stood, my conductor had given lessons in Armenian to Lord Byron, who frequented the convent for that purpose, and assisted his teacher in preparing a grammar of the language. In a smaller library I was shown many interesting works printed in the convent; among others, a prayer book in twenty-four languages, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Rollin's *Ancient History*, translated into Armenian by the learned padre. Having looked at the press below, and enjoyed the fine view from various parts of the building, I took my leave, eminently gratified with this visit to one of the seemingly truly admirable institutions extant. Its objects are primarily the instruction of Armenian youth, the general dissemination of knowledge, and the cultivation of literature in connection with theology. Its members, strictly speaking, are Armenians, but education is afforded to others, through visits to the island. Brethren are continually sent forth; my good friend himself had been a considerable traveller, and I could readily believe his assertion, that in all his wanderings, he had found no spot like this.

The day was drawing to a close when I embarked for a final excursion, and, having reached the *lido*, passed a pleasant hour in promenading

the Adriatic shore, with that beautiful expanse of water stretching beyond the limits of vision, and soothingly laving the sands at my feet. Upon returning, the sun was below the horizon, and the deep, pompous outline of the Tyrol rose commandingly in the distance; a rich glow suffused the face of the western sky, and the evening star gleamed peacefully. The still waters of the gulf reflected with beautiful distinctness the spires and adjoining buildings, and the few vessels in the port lay perfectly tranquil upon its bosom. At that hour, when the associations of Venice are so earnestly excited by its own quiet beauty, my old gondolier grew communicative. To-morrow, he said, was the anniversary of one of the most splendid festas of the republic. On that day, fifty years ago, the Doge, senators, nobility and distinguished strangers embarked in the golden barge, and when arrived at the *lido*, the former dropped a ring into the sea, and then the whole company repaired to a neighboring church to celebrate a solemn function, after which a grand fete was partaken of at the palace, and innumerable comfits distributed upon the piazza; thus, yearly, were observed the nuptials of the Adriatic. He had been in the service of Byron three years and a half, and during that time, had daily, after dinner, transported the poet to the shore, where he rode along the sands for some hours; and often had he followed him with the gondola as he swam or floated for miles upon the calm surface

of the bay. The little white house to which the curious repaired to see him mount his horse, and the convent which he daily frequented, were pointed out; and as an instance of his lordship's generosity, the bargeman bid us remember that when the printer whom he employed in Venice lost his establishment by fire, he privately sent him a hundred louis d'ors. As an evidence of the fallen fortunes even of the gondoliers, he declared that immediately prior to the downfall of the republic, he received forty francs per day from two *Signori Inglesi*, for fifteen days, beside a *buonamano* of a suit of clothes; while an eighth of that sum is the present stipend. I induced the old man to sing a stanza of Tasso, as I thus approached the city. The evening gun resounded, a band of music struck up, and silently contemplating the realization of my dreams of Venice, I touched the steps of the quay, and emerged from that silent solemnity upon the illuminated and gaily occupied Piazza of St. Marco—to feel with him of whom I was just conversing, that

“Beauty still is here ;
States fall, arts fade, but nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear.”

ITALIAN JOURNEYING.

———“ If in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his ; if on ye swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore the sandal shoon and scallop shell.”

ALTHOUGH called by the vetturino, on a January morning, at about half past two, I had cause, as usual, to regret my ready attention to his summons, for it was nearly six when I was actually moving on in the cabriolet of the carriage by the side of my *compagnon de voyage*. The thin scattered clouds which dimmed the sky of early day gathered more darkly as we proceeded, so that all means of avoiding direct contact with the rain were soon put in requisition. It was no small disappointment to me, when arrived at our first stopping-place, Albano, to find myself shivering at the scanty fire of the inn-kitchen, instead of roaming over the hill and about the lake which give so much celebrity to this village. One of the passengers, more hale, though I ween

not more zealous than myself, made a hurried visit to the spot, and returned quite wet, to complain of the littleness of the sheet of water dignified with the title of lake. When we again set out, the rain was pouring in torrents, and the utter gloominess of the scenery, and comparatively comfortless state of our feelings, made the slow riding of the few remaining hours of light uninteresting, to say the least. How the miserable dinner, cold quarters, and dreary aspect of our night's shelter were gone through with, every old traveller can imagine. Each bore the several privations according to his humor, though the chief consolation seemed to be derived from the idea of home-comfort which the contrast suggested.

A seemingly long, and equally dark ride brought us the ensuing morning to the borders of the Pontine Marshes, renowned for the antiquated attempt to drain them, and some circumstances of ancient history in connection with which they are mentioned. The quality which has rendered them somewhat formidable in modern times—their pestiferous exhalations—was imperceptible, either from our confined situation, or the peculiar state of the atmosphere. We ran with great rapidity over the fine road which crosses them, extending twenty-four miles, and reached the Terracina Hotel, just as a little interval of temporary sunshine occurred. From a back window of this castle-like building, I could gaze

out upon the wide waters of the Mediterranean, as they came rolling splendidly onward in high waves, which were spurned backward by the jutting rocks, or lost themselves moaningly upon the sands. This most sublime object in nature I viewed with something of the delight with which we unexpectedly encounter an old friend, as well as with much of the imaginative satisfaction it must ever inspire.

'The bright waters of a sea like this! They brought to mind the fearful acts they had consummated, the awful wrecks made by their treacherous workings, the scenes enacted on their shores, the men by whose writings they have been hallowed. But they suggested yet more tender and awakening associations. It was by such a medium that I passed with a dream-like rapidity from the new to the old world; from influences more deeply operative than art's most perfect witchery; from my home to a strange land. Were these waters as living messengers, could one breath of my most native sentiment, one gush of my heart's best feelings enter and roll on within a wave, seemingly pure enough to embody something spiritual, until it was poured upon my native shore—how eloquent would it be of gratitude and greeting!

We soon crossed the pass formed by the sea on the one side, and high hills on the other, where Maximius posted his troops to resist the onward march of Hannibal. This pass, like all of na-

ture's strong holds, is apparently invulnerable when in any wise fortified ; and in the season of flowers and verdure, must present a very beautiful appearance. We next reached Fondi, in which beggarly village we were long detained for the examination of our baggage. I regretted that night prevented my having a glimpse of the building, supposed to have been the tomb of Cicero, erected on the spot where he met so undeserved a fate. Our night at Mola was somewhat better than the previous one, and yet sufficiently dull. The moaning of the sea beneath the windows, and the splashing of the rain, made most unpromising music, while the cold stone floors and scanty accommodations did not much counteract its influence. The most cheering object which met our eyes the next morning, after several miles' ride, was the sun, who succeeded this time in pushing his fiery course through the cloudy crowd which surrounded, as a troop of pressing retainers, his imperial out-going. Some very antique-looking aqueducts, and an admirable new bridge which crosses the Garigliano, (anciently the Liris,) next occupied our notice. The noon rest was at the miserable village of modern Capua, the inn and aspect of which, we concluded, were the worst we had yet seen. The remainder of our ride lay over a very dirty though level road. It was surprising to observe that a highway so near a great city was no more travelled or better kept than this appeared to be.

Night fell sometime before we reached Naples, and we observed a fire, apparently burning in a narrow and long streak upon a hill side, which, seen thus, through a misty atmosphere and a long vista of trees, was quite remarkable. It was the distant looming of Vesuvius !

It was long before day-break, and during damp and cloudy weather, that we entered the old coach which was to convey us to Rome. A young Dominican monk, with his white habiliments, within, and two German youths, without, completed the party; and we moved tardily along, after our passports had been inspected at the gate. The air and aspect, during the long day, continued to wear a November cast; and a lonely and cold ride at night, contributed to render our journey, at its outset, one of those dismal experiences, so often described in the traveller's tale. The following day proved much clearer and colder; and toward its close, our interest became excited by coming in view of the ground where Hannibal obtained his signal victory over Flaminius. The very tower to which the conqueror's horse was tied, is still pointed out. The site of this battle-ground, at the end of the lake of Trasimenus, seemed, beneath the dim light of a gloomy sky, quite extensive enough, and sufficiently environed with elevations, to afford ample scope for the manœuvring and action of ancient warfare; and its present solitary aspect must

present a wonderful contrast to the energy and effects once developed there. Beside that lake, in a grim old inn, we rested till dawn, and found the first stage of our early ride exceedingly uncomfortable, from the cold.

It was about noon when we reached Perugia, and after a slight repast, commenced peregrinating the old town. I was amused to observe that the inhabitants, even the meanest clad, wore their cloaks somewhat after the Roman fashion, having the right skirt thrown over the left shoulder. In the church of St. Dominic, we found the large window of stained glass, behind the altar, quite splendid, and from its striking position and size, by far the most beautiful ornament in the building. Hastening to the church of St. Peter, we were impressed with its admirable locality, being placed upon an elevation without the immediate circle of houses, commanding from behind a very extensive prospect, and having in front an ample esplanade. The pictures it contains are very interesting, not so much from actual power, as on account of their authors. There are several of Perugini, the master of Raphael, his own master, and a few of Raphael's, which are obviously first efforts. These evince that gradual but distinct improvement in style and execution, by which every art and effort of humanity is carried toward perfection. Scarcely a square foot of wall is there in this church which is not adorned with frescos; and the

whole building, with its contents, is a pleasing little antiquity.

On our way from this town we left the coach to inspect another church by the road-side, which was undergoing repairs, called the *Madonna degli Angeli*. Here, scattered upon the cold pavement, were some Franciscans, in their coarse habits of brown stuff, looking more miserable in their ignorant dejection than any of the Catholic priesthood we had fallen in with. Even-
ing found us at Foligno, where we saw little to interest us, except the feats of some children who were leaping in a shed, much to the amusement of a vulgar audience, and a view of the innumerable props by which many of the older houses, shattered by a recent earthquake, seemed to be mainly sustained.

The next morning we paused upon the post-road, soon after recommencing our journey, to observe the temple of Clitumnus, now a chapel, rendered worthy of notice from its antiquity. At Spoleto, our noon resting place, we were not—strange to tell—charged for attention to our passports. This was the first town which appeared to me possessed of the genuine characteristics of ancient interest. A time-worn and quiet aspect was here immediately observable. Passing through Hannibal's gate, so called from an inscription thereon, setting forth the successful defence made by the ancient inhabitants against his attacks, we came in view of a grand aque-

duct, supported by long and remarkably narrow arches, and quite massive in execution. The scenery immediately contiguous is the finest of its class in the route; the grand slope of the hill, and the vivid verdure of the ever-green pine being very refreshing to the eye. Indeed, the appearance of the country grew far more picturesque about this period, the range of the Apennines becoming more lofty and variegated.

At Terni, which we reached in the afternoon, we found a guide, and made exertions to reach the celebrated cascade in the vicinity, before sunset. The hilly path was ascended by means of donkeys, which we procured at its base. Embosomed in high and verdant hills, over the brow of one of which it descends, is the fall. It pours nobly down, being of a milky whiteness, and moving with a grace and music such as alone is evinced by these beautiful phenomena in nature. There, its white form of beauty amid a spacious and green amphitheatre, and crowned with silvery mist, falls ever the glorious cascade. As a vision too sweet long to linger, it has passed from before me; but its memory is indelible, more pleasing to recall than even the monuments of ancient art or the peculiarities of olden time.

Our stop the succeeding day was at the mean village called Otriculum, without whose southern wall we tarried some time, looking upon the adjacent country, and especially upon a narrow and greenish, but beautifully meandering stream,

trying to realize that it was, in truth, the Tiber. We found, too, an old castle, to beguile the time until overtaken by our carriage, which soon brought us to Civita Castellana. On entering this town we dismounted, and lingered to admire a very deep and umbrageous defile which is spanned by the bridge. We noticed, as somewhat remarkable, that the cathedral here, which is partly composed of an ancient temple, has mosaic work upon its outer front. A fine castle, which probably gives the town its name, is the only other obvious object of interest.

This journey, commenced on the third of November, and concluded on the evening of the eighth, would have been somewhat tedious, but for social intercourse, and a few attendant subjects of reflection. The almost total want of comfort at the miserable inns, is indeed no small drawback; but my chief disappointment resulted from the want of beauty and interest in the appearance of nature. The only fine tree which met our view was the small olive of the country. Far more glorious are the variegated hues of autumn in America, than the monotonous coloring which here blends so much of the vegetative aspect. Throughout the ride, it frequently required effort to realize where we were; and only when within an old church, or in sight of an antiquated town, or once or twice at early morning, between two remarkably fine Apennine hills,

did we feel what one would deem the legitimate influences of Italy.

Silently, and almost sadly, did I travel onward from the Tuscan dominions towards new scenes. We soon came upon the Apennine range, and thenceforward were continually ascending and descending. A dull warm atmosphere constantly prevailed, with occasional rain. The aspect of nature was consonant with my feelings. The vapor wreathed itself around the summits, and floated far down among the long defiles which were ever before us. In the evening we reached Bologna. Its arched sidewalks give to the streets a very gloomy appearance; and this impression was enhanced by the number of soldiery—the minions of Austria—everywhere visible. We visited the churches and public promenade, and attentively regarded the statue of Neptune, by Giovanni di Bologna, in the principal piazza, and the leaning tower. We also made an excursion of three miles into the environs, and viewed the immense line of arches, extending thence to the city. The *Campo Santo* occupied us some time; and although some of the monumental decorations are interesting, and the great scale of the establishment striking, yet there is little to create that impression which is perhaps the only really excellent result of such institutions.

At the Academy of Fine Arts I found a higher satisfaction, and dwelt long upon the Madonna,

Elizabeth, and the Infant Jesus, in the act of blessing Saint John, the Madonna della Pieta, and the Slaughter of the Innocents, by Guido Reni. St. Cecilia listening to a Choir of Angels, and surrounded by St. Paul, St. John, St. Augustine, and the Magdalene, particularly interested me, as being one of Raphael's, and in his last style. An expression of fervid enjoyment is singularly obvious in the beaming countenance of St. Cecilia. Many pictures also, by Francia, drew my attention, he being the contemporary of Raphael, and remarkably developing his style. There is, too, a fine work of art by Domenichino—the Martyrdom of St. Agnes. Upon departing for Ferrara, we were almost at once upon the plains of Lombardy, and our remaining journey formed a striking contrast with its preceding portions. The poplar, peculiar to the country, bordered the road, but in form it is not comparable with what I had seen at home: the mulberry, too, prevailed, and, as we learned, was cultivated wholly on account of the silk manufacture to which it ministers;—an extensive affair here. The solitude was striking, nor was it diminished essentially when, shortly before sunset, we reached Ferrara, the principal thoroughfare of which city alone seemed well inhabited; many broad streets presenting a perfectly destitute appearance. I found Byron had not taken a poetical license when he called them “grass-grown.”

The comparatively ordinary monument to Ariosto, in the promenade, was the only object of interest which we had time to seek. The succeeding day we crossed the Po, an apparently sluggish stream, environed by an exceedingly flat country. After a weary examination of our luggage, at this commencement of the Austrian dominions, we continued our route through such a quiet and dead plain, that the sight of Monte Silece, and its three adjacent elevations, was quite refreshing to the eye. At a village at the foot of this mountain we passed the night, and every previous hour of light was delightfully spent in viewing the seemingly interminable plains from various points of the hill.

As I stood upon the old terrace in front of a rough grotto, (containing full length figures of St. Frances, the Madonna and Saviour,) looking forth upon the almost boundless prospect, and then wandered among the ruins of a castle, upon the hill's summit, observed the old towering broken palace, with no living object about it but the figure of a withered crone, knitting at the door, I thought I had never seen a spot so in unison with the legends of the middle ages, which romance has hallowed and adorned. As we returned, the numerous cypresses attracted our attention. We entered a little church, where was a knot of village girls, with their white mantillas and black eyes, engaged in their devotions. Upon emerging, we noted a youth, whose dress and manners

seemed too studied for accident, in such a spot ; we were not long in surmising his intentions, for among the maidens, came forth one singularly beautiful ; her head was tastefully adorned with flowers, and her air somewhat sprightly and confident. I doubted not she was the beauty of the village ; and as the young man smilingly glided along by her side, and at the turn leading to the town, darted into a narrow by-path, I read a tale of love, of love in its spring-time, and sighed as I thought what might be its harvest. The next morning we arrived in Padua, and the busy and cheerful aspect of the place, it being fair day, at once interested and pleased me. Two or three hours were satisfactorily passed in viewing the churches :—that of St. Antonio (the patron saint of Padua) is a grand structure, and the Scuola adjacent interesting. I admired the free, clean aspect, and sculpture ornaments of St. Justin, but lingered longest in the court and corridors of the old university, where were assembled a finer collection of young men than I had before seen in Italy, awaiting the lecture hour. I entered one of the high, dark chambers, where a professor, in his black and ermine bound robe, was questioning a large number of students on the subject of his prior discourse on jurisprudence. There was something which brought home forcibly to my mind, in the liberal, studious, christian aspect of this institution, and indeed of the whole city.

After dining at the Acquila d'Ora, three hours' riding brought us to the shore, whence we embarked in a gondola. The ocean queen lay before us, stretching her line of building tranquilly upon the still waters. In an hour we were in the main canal. I looked up to the antiquated and decayed buildings, the time-worn, yet rich architecture of the palaces; I felt the deep silence, the eloquent decay, and long before the gondola touched the steps of the hotel, I realized that I was in Venice.

THE LAST SOJOURN.

" And now farewell to Italy—perhaps
Forever! Yet, methinks, I could not go,
I could not leave it, were it mine to say
Farewell forever!"

MILANO! why is thy very name suggestive of so many and such affecting associations? The luxuriance and fertility amid which Napoli is reared, the mellow air of antiquity that broods over the Eternal city, Firenze's picturesque beauty, Venezia's unique aspect—these attractions are not thine. Assuredly in thy sister cities there is more to interest, more to admire, more to delight a retrospective ideality. True, at the coming on of evening, one may gaze unweariedly upon the equipages of thy nobility and the beauty of thy daughters, as they pass in dazzling succession along the Corso, and wonder not that thy modern conqueror called thee his second Paris. True, thy splendid marmoreal cathedral, with its clustering spires, its countless statuary adorn-

ments, its magnificent proportions and gothic solemnity—true, thy cathedral is a tabernacle wherein to linger, rejoice and *feel*; and the richly-wrought chapel beneath, with the corse of Carlo Borromeo, in its crystal coffin, is a marvellously gorgeous sepulchre, and the broad white roof above, whence the eye glances over the blue range of distant mountains and verdant plains of Lombardy, is no ordinary observatory. And then, again, one who loves to lose himself in mystic musings, may stand in the bare and deserted refectory of *Santa Maria della Grazia*, and ponder the mouldering remnant of Leonardo's genius,—tracing the fretted outlines of the forms and faces revered, that are clustered around the "Last Supper;" and if it rejoice one to behold the very poetry of physical life radiated from inanimate matter, he may note the sinewy forms, nervous limbs, distended nostrils, and arching necks of the bronze steeds at the Simplon Gate; ay, and one may beguile an hour at the Gallery of Art, were it only in perusing the countenance of Hagar, as she turns away from her home at the bidding of Abraham, as depicted by the pencil of Guercino; or study the relics preserved in the Ambrosian Library; or sit, on a festa day, beneath the spreading chesnuts of the public gardens, surrounded by fair forms and gay costumes, while the air is rife with the inspiring instrumental harmony of the Austrian band. But is it the memory of such ministrations alone

that makes the thought of thee, Milano, what it is to me? No: I revert with fondness to thy level precincts and mountain-bound environs, because there the air of Italia was last inhaled—there her melody died away upon my ear—there was my last sojourn in Italy.

The lapse of a few hours in Milan sufficed to indicate that something unusual was occupying and interesting the public mind. The *caffés* echoed the tones of earnest discussion; shrugs, nods, and expressive gesticulations were lavished with even more than Italian prodigality; dark eyes beamed with expectancy; the favored votaries of amusement had something like a business air about them; the tradesmen loitered longer in by-way converse; the journals teemed with eloquent and controversial articles; pamphlets were distributed, and placards posted. You might have deemed that the period so vividly described by Manzoni, when the Milanese were agitated by the factions which contended so long and warmly years gone by, about the price of bread, had returned, but that the prevailing language of the present popular feeling was that of pleasure—of enthusiasm, rather than passion—of common anticipation, rather than discordant interests. An American might have augured, from the signs of the time, that a strongly contested election was proceeding; and a Parisian would probably have discerned the incipient elements of a revolution; but the cause of the excitement was such as

could produce similar visible effects no where but in Italy ; and no one but an Italian, or a familiar denizen of the land, could perfectly appreciate the phenomena. The title-page of one of the newly issued publications reveals the ostensible circumstance which is at the bottom of the social agitation ; "*La Malibran à Milano*"—yes, the renowned Malibran had been unexpectedly engaged to give three representations of an opera, in which Pasta—the beloved of the Milanese, had been performing with what they deemed inimitable excellence. Long before the period designated, the boxes of the Scala were secured ; and many an ardent sojourner, and unprovided native, anxiously awaited the period when the other parts of the house would be thrown open for general and indiscriminate appropriation.

When at length the eventful evening arrived, the descending chandelier revealed an impatient multitude that, five hours previous, had taken possession of the *parterre*. Maria Louisa was a prominent occupant of the court box ; and Pasta, in the intense interest of the occasion, leaned over, and followed with a keen gaze the form of her rival, till it disappeared behind the scenes. Throughout the brilliant assemblage, convened in that splendid edifice, there was alternately profound silence or resounding acclamations ; and five times, at the close, did the *bravissima donina* obey the call, and come forth to receive their rapturous plaudits. It was with a melancholy emo-

tion, almost oppressive, that I remembered, on leaving the house, at the close of the last evening, that for me this beautiful magic was to cease. I felt that harmony, such as never before blessed my ears, was to enliven me no more; that, like a summer breeze, it had borne its cool refreshment, it had wafted its odorous perfume, it had awakened its note upon the harp of the spirit, and had flown on to cheer some other and more distant sojourner.

Awhile before the diligence started, I once more entered the cathedral. The noon-day sun was streaming through the stained glass of the windows, and a few priests were chanting at the altar. Seating myself beneath one of the lofty arches, and viewing again the gothic grandeur and rich tressil-work around me, I yielded to the overwhelming reveries of the hour. I could not but feel that a few days of rapid movement would take me, perhaps forever, from a land which had calmly but deeply ministered to my happiness, and gradually but surely gained upon my love. There was an earnest reluctance, a rebellion of the strong desires, a painful intermission in the cherished train of emotion, at this renouncement of objects endeared by taste and habit. But especially did my thoughts cling sadly and tenaciously around what previous ideas and native sentiment had prepared me most readily and fervently to love—humanity. I felt that if the social activity and predominance of

mental endeavor which characterize my own country were wanting here, yet that I had known and experienced much of the true spirit of fraternity, much of intellectual enthusiasm and generous sentiment. I thought of the many hours of quiet and innocent enjoyment, the instances of social kindness, the offices of sympathy, and the spirit-stirring song, which had each and all opened fountains of living joy in a young but anxious breast. I realized in this hour of parting, how near and dear the scenes and gratifications of Italy were to my heart. The moral weaknesses and errors of the land were not, indeed, absent from my mind; but, with the thought of them, came also that of their causes, their palliations, and hopes for their subjugation under auspices fitted to cherish and develope the talent and feeling worthy of human nature.

At about mid-day we departed, and were rapidly carried along the rich plains, looking greener and more fertile as we approached their termination. Towards dusk the mountains rose sublimely in the distance, and the beautiful and still surface of Lago Maggiore was brilliantly revealed in the light of a full moon; this landscape, indeed, feasted our eyes during the early part of the night's ride, and fled only when the broken slumbers obtainable in a diligence, veiled or rendered introspective our visions. On leaving Domo d'Ossola, a scene was presented in every respect a contrast with what the preceding day's

ride had displayed ;—rugged mountains, snow-capped and rock-bound, now rising abruptly, and now gradually declining, here unclothed with aught umbrageous, there supporting the clinging firs, sometimes moist with dripping springs, and at others, exhibiting a dry unbroken surface of granite. The cold bleak points, hoary with snow, were ever above us, the murmuring of falling water continually audible, and some new combination of crude and aspiring mountain, winding vale, and chainless rock, ever and anon attracting the eye. Attention, too, was often and irresistibly withdrawn from this chaotic scenery to the immense product of human art, of which we were so securely availing ourselves. The precipices on either side, the rough-hewn grottos through which we passed, the ever-varying and yet ever wild and solitary aspect of all around, evidenced that we were upon the Simplon. For some time after the moon had again arisen, the foaming waters of the Rhone were seen glancing like molten silver in her beams. After leaving Martigny, the Pissevache Fall was in view ; its misty and graceful form, even at that early hour, crowned with rainbow hues ; and beyond St. Maurice, another beautiful object appeared—a long fleecy cloud, resting, spirit-like, upon the centre brow of a lofty mountain. Ere long, the broad and blue waters of Lemane were in sight, and our course lay along its shore, by the castle of Chillon, and the villages of Vivey and Lau-

sanne. From the succeeding dawn until our arrival at Geneva, we were riding in view of the lake, rich and flower-decked meadows, beautiful villas, and far away, white and towering, the "awful and sovran Blanc" met the eye, to kindle imaginative visions of grandeur; to transport the beholder into the beautiful valley at its base, within hearing of its waterfalls, and full in view of its congregated sublimity. So magic-like did the versatile and effective images collect and pass upon the mind's camera, that it was not until the contrasted and magnificent insignia of Switzerland thus completely environed us, and the impressions thence derived became continuous and absorbing, that I felt that the staff of my pilgrimage was indeed re-assumed, and my sojourn in Italy ended.

TALES.



THE DISCLAIMER.

A TALE OF ROME.

“ Know that the human being’s thoughts and deeds
Are not like ocean billows lightly moved ;
The *inner world* his microcosmus is—
The deep shaft out of which they spring eternally.”

I KNOW of few situations more favorable to the indulgence of a habit—doubtless of questionable utility in these utilitarian days, although sanctioned by the example of no less a personage than Geoffrey Crayon—the habit of day-dreaming, than that of a traveller when cosily ensconced within the narrow limits of an Italian *vettura*. If the coach is old, the steeds superannuated, and the *vetturino* utterly devoid of Jehu ambition, as is ordinarily the case—if the road abound in long, winding declivities—if the passengers be taciturn, and the quiet, sunny atmosphere of early autumn prevail, such a combination of circumstances will produce upon his mental mood somewhat the effect of lateral sunbeams shining through richly-colored windows, upon the marble

floor of a cathedral. The images of Memory and Hope will appear magnified, and lit up into soothing beauty, as revealed by the mellow light of musing. At least, such was my experience during the afternoon of a long day, the evening of which we designed to pass under shelter of the Seven Hills, whence the thunders of ancient eloquence and war were so lavishly fulminated. Aroused by the exclamation of a Tuscan friar, my next neighbor, who had mistaken a semi-circular cloud floating in the far horizon, for the dome of St. Peter's, I began to note the state of things around. Our humble locomotive was creeping up a hill, formidable only from its length, and the customary murmur of paupers at the windows was blending with the rumbling of the carriage and the monotonous cheerings of the *vetturino*. Suddenly a face peered in at the window, so singular and startling in its features and expression, as to convey an impression never to be forgotten. The beggar throng seemed to have been awed into a retreat by the stranger's appearance; so that the idea, that he was of their fraternity, was banished as soon as suggested. Grasping the knob of the coach door, and leaning over till his long, dark beard rested on the window sill, he gazed with stern mournfulness upon us, and muttered, in a subdued, quiet tone, alternately in German and Italian,—“I didn't do it,” till our vehicle reached the summit of the mountain, when, at the renewed speed

of the horses, he stopped, waved his hand, looked after us a moment, and was lost to view.

While we were tarrying at the gate, to obtain the requisite signatures to our passports, a fine-looking old gentleman, one of the occupants of the cabriolet, perceiving my thoughts were still upon the remarkable intrusion we had recently experienced, seemed disposed to converse on the subject.

“Was not that a head for Salvator’s pencil?” he asked.

“Ay—think ye he could not unfold a tale meet for Dante’s *Inferno*?” inquired the friar.

The old man seemed somewhat offended, and turned away without replying.

“Can you tell me aught of this man?” I asked.

“Signor,” he replied, “perhaps I can. We shall doubtless meet, ere many days, at the *caffé* or on the Pincian”——

He was interrupted by the officer who returned us our passports, and in a moment after we were rattling by the fountain in the Piazza del Popolo, most of us absorbed in the thousand varying emotions with which the stranger for the first time enters the Eternal city.

Whoever would effectually banish the disagreeable impression which the first view of the Forum, when seen by the garish light of day, almost invariably induces, should early avail

himself of a moonlight evening, to renew his visit. The wood merchants, lounging among their cattle and diminutive carts—the score of ant-like excavators, and the groups of improvidents, are then no longer visible, and the scene exhibits something of the dignity which we spontaneously associate with Roman ruins. At such a season I had perambulated, more than once, the space between the Arch of Titus and the Temple of Peace, and began to wonder that no other sojourner had been tempted by the auspicious light to roam thither—for the moon was nearly full, and the atmosphere remarkably clear—when, happening to glance toward the Coliseum, I saw a stately figure emerge from the pile, as if to answer my conjecture. There are circumstances under which the sight of a human being—simply as such—is an event of profound interest. Thus it was on this occasion; and I stepped from the shadow of the ruin near which I was standing, that the stranger might be aware of my presence. Immediately his steps were directed toward me, and, while yet at some distance, the voice in which his salutation was uttered, convinced me that my aged *compagnon de voyage* was approaching. In a few moments we were seated upon a bench which some laborers had left among the weeds, muffled in our cloaks; and thus the old man spoke in answer to my entreaties for his promised tale.

"It is a curious study, signor, to trace the inklings of superstition, where the general vein of character is vivacious or its elements intense. And it is, perhaps, impossible for an unimagina-tive mind to understand the deep interest which urges some men daringly to touch the sensitive and latent chords of the human heart, in order to call forth their mystic music. Yet with Carl Werner, the love of thus experimenting was a passion. Not that he lacked susceptibility; on the contrary, the very refinement of his feelings led him to speculate upon the deeper and more intricate characteristics of his race. Deeply imbued with the transcendental spirit which distinguishes the intellectual men of his country, his curiosity was essentially ideal. Several years ago he arrived in Rome, and was soon domesticated in the family of Christofero Verdi, whose suite of apartments were directly above a range of studios in one of the most extensive buildings in the *Via Condotta*. His rooms, as you must be aware, if you have many acquaintances among the German residents here, were, at this time, a great resort for northern artists. Berenice Verdi, his only child, was one of those beings who seem destined to pass through life without being justly apprehended even by their intimates. There was a peculiar want of correspondence between her ordinary manner and real disposition. She was playful rather than serious, and yet beneath a winning sportiveness of demeanor, deep and

• strange elements of feeling and fancy were glowing. Between Carl and Berenice there grew up a strong sympathy; and yet the sentiment could not be called love. Indeed, her habitual treatment of her father's young friend was what the world would call coquettish. She was ever rallying him on his peculiarities, and he was ever acting the philosopher rather than the beau. But the truth was, she deeply revered Carl, and was drawn toward him by his very isolation and kindness; and he saw farther into her character than any one else, and was sensible of an interest such as the consciousness of this insight alone, would naturally inspire. Berenice was nervous and excitable in her temperament, and susceptible to the awful in romance beyond any being I ever knew. Carl wielded this influence with the freedom and power of an imaginative German. She felt his sway, and, like other unacknowledged victims in the social universe, strove, perhaps unwittingly, by an assumed appearance, to keep out of sight reality.

“Carl came to Rome professedly as an artist; but the views, the motives, the very spirit of the man were as totally unlike those which influence and characterize the multitude of students of painting and sculpture who frequent this region, as his physiognomy; and that, you are aware, is sufficiently remarkable. One trait, which I observed at once, was sufficient to distinguish him from the herd. So wide and seemingly impas-

sable, in his mind, was the chasm between conception and execution, that his genius, inventive and active as it was, appeared completely thwarted and bewildered. The few results of its exercise with which I am acquainted, were called forth by the appeal of friendship; and these were altogether insufficient to rescue the young German from the charge of idleness and apathy brought against him, sometimes with no little asperity, by some members of his fraternity. But Carl duly received his remittances, discharged his obligations, contributed his moiety toward the convivial enjoyments of his compatriots, and molested no one; and, therefore, he was permitted to enjoy his eccentricities in comparative peace. One or two letters were, indeed, forwarded by a pretentious acquaintance to his nearest relative, suggesting the expediency of incarcerating him in an insane asylum; but as no notice was taken of the epistles, it is presumed they shared the common fate of voluntary advice, and were treated with perfect indifference, silent indignation, or contempt. The conduct which induced such a procedure was, in truth, such as an ordinary observer would naturally ascribe to mental aberration; and, strictly speaking, it might have been thus accounted for philosophically. Carl passed the greater part of every night amid these ruins; his speculations on the obelisks, treasures of the Vatican, and even on the opera performances, were as unintelligible to

most persons as they were intrinsically peculiar. But his chief peculiarity was that to which I first alluded—a disposition to play upon the minds of his fellow beings, by addressing their hopes and fears through the medium of imagination. I could not now relate the thousand anecdotes I have heard in illustration of the force of this propensity in him. The single, fatal instance, of the effects of which I was personally a witness, will suffice.

“One evening, while Carl and several brother artists were enjoying their coffee at Christofero’s, the conversation turned upon portrait painting, and finally upon the attempts of artists to portray themselves. Berenice—who just before had related a dream, in which several of the old portraits in the Barbarini Palace seemed to her suddenly endowed with life, and to converse together on some of the political interests of their times—rallied Carl as being the only one of the *coterie* who had not attempted his own likeness. ‘Confess, Werner,’ said she, ‘that the fear of not doing justice to thy notable phiz, has deterred thee from any endeavor to prepare even a sketch for thy friends in Leipsic. I doubt if thou wouldst allow Titian and Raphael, should they re-appear, to share the honor of depicting thee.’—Carl made no reply save by composedly sipping his favorite beverage; and when the laugh had subsided, the subject was forgotten in the discussion of some other topic.

“On a fine afternoon, a few days after this interview, Carl and Berenice incidentally met on the dark stair-way. It was not usual for the former to go forth at that hour, and the latter was in a conversable humor. By way of beginning a colloquy, she begged the loan of a particular drawing. Werner, as usual, expressed his readiness to oblige her, and hurried on; but after descending a few steps, he turned round, as if a sudden and important thought had struck him. ‘Berenice,’ said he, ‘go not to my room for the sketch; I will bring it thee in an hour.’—Having thus spoken, he hastened away, the iron-shod heels of his boots ringing on the stone stairs, till he reached the street door—then, returning, with a noiseless tread, to his studio, he so arranged the window curtains as to exclude all light except the chastened rays that gleamed through the upper panes, and shot obliquely across the room, leaving the side which was hung with paintings in shadow. Here he had previously stationed an easel, upon which rested a fresh and richly-draped portrait, while from its edge, masses of green cloth fell in folds to the floor, so that nothing but the projecting top and slanting position of the machine rendered it cognizable. To cut out, with a sharp penknife, the head from the picture, and insert his own living head in its place, to comb the hair and whiskers outward upon the canvas so as to render it impossible to distinguish the actual from the por-

trayed, to fix his dark, deep eye upon a distant point, and compose into death-like quietude the lines of his expressive countenance,—all this with Carl was but the work of a moment.

“Meantime Berenice might be heard restlessly pacing the narrow bounds of her little *boudoir* overhead, her mind occupied precisely as Werner had anticipated. ‘What can Carl be about?’ she musingly inquired; ‘now what if we have laughed him into taking his own portrait?’ A capital joke, truly, to broach at supper to-night! What! the independent, self-sufficient Werner, who lives in the clouds, spurred into unwonted action by the ridicule of us—common mortals? Ha! ha! There can be no harm in taking a single peep into his sanctum. By this time he is on the other side of the river, or in the Villa Borghese.’ And with these reflections, Berenice ran down, and stole gently into the apartment of the mysterious artist.

“Her eye fell directly upon the countenance of Werner. ‘Conceited as ever!’ she exclaimed, regarding the elegant drapery depicted upon the canvas; ‘and the likeness,—poh! that’s no better than it should be; the brow is too ample, the eye too expressive; that scornful play of the lip, though, is right. Well, I suppose this flattered, wooden-looking portrait must be lauded as the best product of the pencil since Vandyke’s time—and all because of the industrious, affable and gifted Carl Werner of Leipsic!’ As Bere-

nice uttered the last sentence, in a tone of irony, she fixed her gaze upon the eyes of the portrait. The echo of her words seemed marvellously prolonged, and just as it died away, the solemn chant of a priestly train, about to administer the last sacrament to the dying inhabitant of the next dwelling, stole mournfully up from the street. The latent superstition of Berenice was awakened. Her gaze became more steadfast. She thought, she dreamed,—nay, she felt that those eyes were reading her soul as they full oft had done; the electric fluid which only *living* eyes can communicate was perceptibly radiated: the very lips seemed wreathing into a meaning smile, and the lines of the forehead working as she had seen them in his thoughtful moods. She would have given worlds to have withdrawn her gaze; but the illusion was too complete. She kneeled down from very feebleness and awe, and folding her arms fervently upon her bosom, as if to still its audible throbbings, she gazed on like a fascinated bird. Cold dew distilled upon her brow; the fever of her blood dried it away, and now its surface was calm, and unmoistened, like newly-chiseled marble.

“Her emotions, individually intense as they were, in their now concentrated energy were momentarily growing more unendurable. She leaned forward in an agony of expectation. The aspect of the portrait remained unchanged, but from the lips stole out, in the tones which had

won her heart, the single word—‘*Berenice!*’ It struck her ear like the knell of a catastrophe. She uttered one despairing cry, and sunk upon the floor. That ejaculation was borne on her last breath.

“When my efforts had been unavailingly exhausted in efforts to resuscitate the unfortunate lady—for being the nearest physician, I was first called—my attention was turned toward the wretched originator of the tragedy. Werner lay crouched upon the carpet, gazing with an expression in which inanity and despair were strangely blended, upon the form of Berenice. Reason was now, indeed, overthrown. Perceiving himself noticed, he crawled to my feet, and looking piteously up, murmured in a convulsive tone—‘*I did n’t do it.*’ His constant repetition of this phrase, year after year, has obtained for him the title of **THE DISCLAIMER**. Remorse peoples his imagination with her awful images. And he will doubtless be a wanderer, feared by the rabble and pitied by few, till accident or disease lays low his powerful frame, and enfranchises from the thrall of insanity his extraordinary and aspiring spirit.”

THE SAD BIRD OF THE ADRIATIC.

“ I loved her from my boyhood—she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart.”

No complacent hero of chivalric times ever sallied forth from his castle-domain with a more free or self-sustained feeling, than Giovanni Deltini left the Monforti Palace—the abode of a branch of his family, on a calm summer evening, at a period subsequent to the era when knightly enterprise was rife in Europe. It had been a day of festival in Venice; of which the young man was reminded by the unusual number of passing gondolas, indicating that their various occupants, wearied with the amusements of the Piazza, were hastening, at an unwontedly early hour, to enjoy the more rational delights of the *conversazione*. The exhilaration or rather hopefulness of his mood was not unobserved by one of his associates, whose gondola slowly approached the palace, while he stood in momentary hesitation upon the steps,—then pointing the

expectant gondolier toward the grand canal, wrapt his light cloak about him, and disappeared beneath the awning. The aspect of Giovanni would not, indeed, have excited the notice of a less circumspect or interested observer; but this cavalier was not unread even in the conventional signs of success, and his own mind being filled with the image of the lovely heiress of the Monforti honors, it was not surprising that the happy aspect of his friend, as he made his egress from that lady's portal, should awaken his passing and perhaps painful attention. He remembered, also, Giovanni's habitual serious if not sad expression—a characteristic which in boyhood had obtained him the appellation of *Signor Preta*, and contrasting it with his present cheerfulness, he immediately, in accordance with his Italian philosophy, ascribed the miraculous change to the magic influence of the same passion which now possessed his own bosom. And a shade of displeasure darkened his brow, as his former intimate returned his formal greeting with familiar affability. Utterly without foundation, however, were the jealous thoughts awakened in the breast of the Signorina Monforti's suitor by this casual meeting. No rival of his was Giovanni; not having even seen or sought to see, on the present occasion, the fair denizen of the palace. His frequent visits thither, however, were not without an object and an interest. His favorite recreation was discussion with Father

Teodoro—the old confessor whom the Duke of Monforti had, many years before, adopted as a friend and counsellor. Giovanni had been early attracted to the old man's side by the fund of story which he pictured out with dramatic effect, to the ardent imagination of the enthusiastic boy; and the fountain which had quenched his childish thirst for novelty, now ministered to his manly appetite for knowledge, and excited into pleasurable activity, the reflective sentiment, which was the deepest resource of his nature.

Giovanni had resided for several years in Padua, and at the then flourishing university of that city had obtained an education beyond that which many of his elders could boast, since it had subserved the acquisition of habits of mind and the formation of tastes of a high and felicitous character. He had been but a few days in his native city; and his family being at their estate on the borders of the Brenta, the young Venetian freely devoted the hours to reviving his acquaintance with the varied haunts of earlier years. With the exception of the good padre's society, his enjoyments had, thus far, been chiefly of a solitary kind.

The converse of this evening had been peculiarly happy. The young Deltini had passed the morning in attending the *regatta* sports and church ceremonies. He had entered cheerfully into the spirit of the day—for he was neither unsocial nor morose, although thoughtfully inclined,

and ideal in his tendencies. The friend to whose companionship he had trusted, for his chief pleasure, during the festa, deserted him with a hasty apology, to follow in the train of a rich senator whom Giovanni despised for his arrogance. And the youth had passed the remainder of the day in a listless and dissatisfied state of mind, and retired from its festivities with scarcely an inkling of the alacrity which was fresh and eager within him at the morning hour. In a word, the sad recollection which the susceptible as well as the unrefined must endure, had begun to dawn—we should rather say lower—upon him, even from what the unthinking would call the *trivial* experience of a day. He had felt, almost for the first time, the solitude of a crowd; he had deeply recognized the selfishness of the world. He was an incipient misanthrope. And yet from communion with a kindred but more mature spirit, he came forth with the bearing of one who had something to live for, and much to hope. His Mentor had vividly suggested to him the idea of philanthropy, and excited a consciousness of personal capacity. A splendid vista was opening to his mind's eye; a beautiful spirit was rising from the subsiding tide of past emotion; a rich vision was shaping itself from the mists of futurity, and the sun of Hope was arraying it in its golden hues. And the outward scene marred not the world of musing; for the gondola had quietly shot out from among the buildings, and

was gliding, almost alone, upon the moon-lit bay of Venice.

The epoch which preceded the downfall of the Adriatic Queen, although it witnessed the gradual resignation of her foreign conquests, was not, for a considerable period, marked by any prominent indications of decay within the boundaries of the Ocean City. The immense riches which the enjoyment of such noble commercial facilities had induced, still filled the coffers and displayed itself in the magnificent establishments of the Venetians. And their wealth was probably never more apparent to the stranger, than when the inactivity occasioned by the loss of external advantages, and the cessation of war, had prepared the way for that dire foe against which even the powers of imperial Rome proved unavailing—insidious Luxury. No entertainment commanded so high a price in proportion to its intrinsic excellence, or was more universally sought and enjoyed, than music. The fondness for the art which characterizes the Italians, was gratified to an extent easily imagined, at a period when the means of procuring it in perfection, were so abundant as among the wealthy children of the Sea-Cybele. Many a family who could not boast of a *casa granda* on the Great Canal, or whom circumstances had precluded from sharing the perils and profits of commerce, thanked the Virgin for the *dolce voce* with which one of its

members was endowed, whereby the handsome support of all of them was secured.

Giovanni was not, therefore, surprised to see a small gondola propelled by a single gondolier, pass the silvery track several rods in advance of his prow. The size and equipment of the little bark, and the evident aim of the oarsman to keep at a little distance and in the line of the breeze, prepared him to expect a serenade, for which he was not, indeed, disinclined. His bargemen almost involuntarily slackened the sweep of the oars, and even repressed, as far as possible, their measured breathing, when the first notes were audible. The precise words of the *cavatina* may not, indeed, be given; but the idea has been happily embodied in a more modern form:—

Senza pace, é senza speme
Con un cor che troppo sente,
Io vedro l' eta ridente
Consumarsi nel dolor,
Ah ! per mi non v'è piú speme,
Non v'è pace, non v'amor !

These words, chanted by a voice modulated to the sweetest intonations, found its way directly to the hearts of the listeners. The oars were suffered to trail till the gondola became almost stationary. Giovanni leaned from the little window, and when the song ceased, cleared his gaze to mark distinctly the fair musician. The

inimitable pathos of the vocalism had moved him deeply, and he was sensible of a spontaneous and respectful interest in the songstress. He could only discover, however, through the blinds of the opposite gondola, the folds of a white garment. Giving the signal to approach, and throwing a coin into the proffered cap of the gondolier, he bade him ask the sweet vocalist to come forth, that he might thank her for a more congenial melody than had blest him for years. That personage replied to his request only by a grave movement, intimating the impossibility of acceding to it; yet there was so much gentleness in the decisive refusal, that even one less kindly disposed than Giovanni could scarcely have been irritated thereby. The manner of the gondolier, therefore, only served to excite his interest more deeply; and now, for the first time, he bestowed upon him the attention his appearance was well calculated to awaken. He was somewhat above the medium height, and his figure so well proportioned and lightly framed as to convey the idea of youth—an impression which his white hair and the bland seriousness of his face at once dissipated. Instead of the decorated jacket, gay sash, and tasseled cap of the craft, his habiliments were of a dark hue; and but for his embroidered vest and the evidence his complexion and thin but muscular arms gave of his avocation, one might have taken the old man, as his form was half concealed in shadow, for a member of

the present Armenian fraternity, as readily as for a gondolier of Venice in the days of her prosperity. Having surveyed him a moment, he was about to renew his request, when he was startled by the hurried whisper of his own gondolier at the stern. "Pardon, signor," said he, "you are a stranger in Venice—we had better away."

"*Pazienza*, Pietro," replied his master. "Old man," he continued, addressing the aged oarsman, "I would see the melodist beneath the awning."

"Thou knowest, signor, the finest warblers have not the richest plumage," quickly again whispered his officious adviser. "*Signor mio*, this parley is dangerous. St. Mark protect us!—ah he is off!"

"Follow!" was the reply; and the gondolas continued side by side.

"Speak, I pray you," said the young man; but the veteran answered only by a sad smile and a gaze of anxious scrutiny directed toward the distant and fairy-like city.

"He is dumb, signor," said one of the boatmen with obvious awe.

"*Poverino*," exclaimed Giovanni; "friend, I desire to behold thy precious charge, because it would bring pleasure to one familiar with sorrow, to look upon the only vocalist, among the many whose voices have echoed beneath this sky to-day, whose music has proved a balm."

A pause followed, broken only by the gentle splash of the oars, and the muttered invocations of those who manned the gondola of Giovanni. "Father Teodoro was right," at length he murmured; "I must learn to be distrusted;" and he threw himself back upon the cushions, with the intention of directing Pietro to abandon the useless pursuit, when a slight noise made him hesitate: the oars were simultaneously lifted, their bearers hastily made the sign of the cross, and the gondolas swayed gently apart, and were at rest. Giovanni noted not these phenomena. That low rattling sound so well known to his ear, was now electrical;—it was produced by slipping aside the blind of the opposite gondola. Thither, as to a revelation of wonder, his eyes were instantly turned. The face which appeared, produced, at first, simply a strong impression of surprise. He had anticipated the sight of beauty; and though his quick fancy had but vaguely imaged its details, the half-formed portrait which that active limner had already created, was naturally instinct with the peculiar species of loveliness that most commonly greeted him. He had unconsciously endowed his invisible consoler with eyes eloquently dark, and hair of the same hue. But these Italian characteristics he failed to discover. The hair of the sweet melodist was, indeed, dark, but not deeply so, and the eyes were Italian only in their expressiveness—so deep, full and varying, that the idea of ascertaining their color never

obtruded itself upon his mind; all that was distinctly realized was their witchery—their mystic and moving power. Giovanni was, at the first glance, only surprised that they were not jet-black, like the eyes of the Padua *donnas* he had heard sing, or the eyes of his sisters, who were doubtless then singing on the banks of the Brenta. It was not remarkable that fine vocalism and black eyes were nearly associated in his mind. Fond as he was of analyzing his feelings, and predetermined as he had been to make his gaze a searching one, the recurrence of those tones sent a new thrill to his heart, and banished his newly regained self-possession.

“Heard I not the name of Father Teodoro, signor?” asked the stranger.

“Thou didst, sweet lady.”

“Dost thou know him?”

“He is my friend—and perchance thine.”

The inquiry seemed to awaken her to a sense of indiscretion;—for she compressed her lips, seemed inwardly chiding herself, and moved as if about to cut short the interview. Giovanni hastened to check even the latent intention, and with respectful earnestness, thus addressed her:—
“Lady—for it is in vain that thou appearest pursuing an avocation generally followed by peasant girls from the shore, or plebeians of the city—lady, let me thank thee for so sweet a serenade, and pardon one who deeply sympathizes with the sorrowful spirit thy melody indi-

cates, for asking what motive induces thee thus richly to minister to the by-way pleasure of Venetians, when thou shouldst grace the innermost circle of their patrician society.”—She who was thus addressed, as the kindly words were uttered, leaned from her gondola, and the clear moonlight rendered beautifully apparent her regular features, calm and finely arched brow—the sweet smile which stole upon her lip, and the grateful tenderness which spoke in her eye. An instant elapsed after he had spoken, when in the same touching voice she pronounced the brief but meaning reply, “*The love of my mother.*” Then gracefully waving her hand, she drew back the lattice; and while Giovanni, completely lost in his own feelings, looked listlessly on—her light barge swiftly sped away in the direction of the nearest shore.

As his gondola approached the city, Giovanni emerged from beneath its sable covering, and leaning upon the frame-work, applied himself to elicit from Pietro intelligence which interested him to a degree of which he was, as yet, quite unaware. “Thou wast wont to be faithful to me, Pietro, when thy fidelity was of little importance, and my favor of no advantage to thee; and methinks that *now* thou canst scarcely prove otherwise.”

“Will the signor question his noble father as to Pietro?” asked the old gondolier, with the confidence of one unjustly suspected.

"No, Pietro; 't is needless. I did but try thee. But hasten to inform me respecting the mysterious occupants of yon strange bark."

"It is little more than a year, signor, since aught was known of them on the Quay or in the Piazza. She is called the Sad Bird of the Adriatic. One of those melancholy serenades which so much delighted you to-night, equally pleased one of the senators who encountered her gondola on his return, about this hour, from Fusina. His efforts to obtain a sight of her were without success, although it is said he proffered a treble salary if she would join his palace band. Many, after this, sought and enjoyed her music; but all attempts to invade her *incognito* were avoided from the fact which was promulgated that she was performing a vow, being under the special protection of the church. Hence she is revered by every one. Her gondola glides about between the Lido and the Quay from sunset till dawn, in weather like this. She never enters the city. Where she abides we know not; although many say at St. Lazarus. Her *buonamano*s are very great, and I think this night, for the first time, has her face been seen on these waters. Ah, signor, I tremble for the consequences of this adventure. Nicolo, the most daring gondolier in Venice, is undergoing severe penance for having pledged himself to track out her retreat. St. Mark grant it may bode us no evil."

"Amen," exclaimed Giovanni; "and remember, Pietro, this meeting is a secret."

"Deep as mid-ocean, signor."

"But the knaves yonder"—pointing to the other bargemen.

"Signor, they are mine!"

Pietro had merely imparted the tale which circulated among his fellows. Camilla Goretti, for such was the true name of the "Sad Bird," was the only daughter of a Tuscan lady of noble origin, who had, a few months before the date of our story, followed her husband to Venice, to await with him the result of a commercial speculation—the last of a series of attempts to amend their fallen fortunes. The experiment totally failed; and the depressed nobleman sank slowly to his grave. The fair mourners had since sojourned in one of the retired islands in the vicinity of Venice. The mother's afflictions and feebleness were obviously subduing her vital powers; and the daughter, in the pure spirit of filial devotion, with the aid of the mute gondolier, who had been in the employ of the church, adopted the scheme we have seen she managed so successfully, and by this means ministered to her parent's every comfort, and yet preserved the seclusion so congenial to her sorrowing heart and native delicacy. She had but one relative in the neighborhood, of whose welfare she managed to keep herself informed, but whose society the stricken family had not sought since their

arrival. He, therefore, remained ignorant of the abode of his relations, though aware of their misfortunes. Camilla was consoled by the title and story which the superstitious fancy of the Venetians had attached to her name, since they threw around her the protecting halo of a sacred mystery. She was only surprised that the mournful strain with which her oppressed feelings forced her to begin her enterprise, should have proved so effective, for she was well aware of the gaiety of the Venetian temperament. She might have understood the charm, however, by reverting to the peculiar interest which the human mind takes in deep feeling, however sad—especially when the prevailing language which addresses it is of a superficial kind, as was then the case in Venice. But unacquainted as she was, with the cause which rendered her airs so attractive, she rejoiced that it was so, since she could then sing from the heart. Joyful music was but mockery to one who was watching the departure from the world of the only being with whom she could claim near alliance. “The love of her mother”—the beautiful motive she had designated as her inspiration—she believed the *last* which would excite her to effort on earth. It was not, however, the destiny of her house, that its last hope should be so speedily extinguished. And when a few months passed away, and the orphan lifted herself from the first despair of bereavement, she found one lingering and saving sentiment

shining up, like a gem of light, from the troubled depths of her soul. Obeying its impulse, after weeks of lone mourning, a new day dawned upon her. But of this we must speak anon.

To a common observer, the life of the young Deltini, after the return of his family, was of the same tenor as that of the generality of noble Venetians whose youth prohibited their engaging in the state duties of the period, and whose frivolity rendered permanent mental application of any kind equally onerous. Giovanni was often encountered, at the usual hours, on the promenade beneath the arcades of St. Mark, and his gondola occasionally seen moored to the steps of the Rialto or at the entrance of one of the superior edifices. None of his gay acquaintances, however, were sufficiently interested to notice the regularity and length of his evening excursions; and if the thoughtfulness of his demeanor, now and then, drew a gaze after him, the spectator, if young, only thought what a marvel it was, that one so recently arrived should not be joyous in festive Venice—and, if old, shrugged meaningly at the idea of the early involvement in her political intrigues which the anxious though unruffled brow denoted. Giovanni *lived* only between morning and evening twilight. The setting sun called him to conscious and glad being. The long summer day was to him a season of dreaming; not that the levee, the feast, or the duties of citizenship were neglected; but their formal

routine was formally gone through with, and gladly escaped. But the farewell rays of the orb of day seemed to awake the spirit of the Venetian, as they did, of old, the latent harmonies of Memnon's image. With the eagerness of a light-hearted boy, he entered his richly-adorned gondola at sunset, gazed fondly over the waters, and flitted from point to point, seemingly on the wings of caprice. But his erratic course was guided by Love and Prudence. He kept almost ever within sight and hearing of Camilla, and without seeming to do so. Thrice only had he approached sufficiently near, to throw a bunch of orange blossoms upon her awning; but these experiments had so evidently induced the venerable gondolier studiously to avoid him, that he long remained contented with nightly hearing, in common with others, the melody of the stranger, and watching her gondola till it disappeared in the gloom at midnight, or was veiled by the morning mist.

At length Giovanni declared to the alarmed Pietro his determination to seek a second interview, at all hazards. The evening selected was unfortunate; gondola after gondola skimmed athwart the bay; each lingered as the voice of Camilla floated by; and from each her dumb boatman received tribute tendered without query or comment. Giovanni awaited comparative solitude till his patience was exhausted. Then motioning his gondolier to fall into the wake of a

senatorial barge, he was soon within hail of the vocalist. Never did her voice sound so rich and moving. He longed, when it had ceased, to hear the broad sweep of the oars before him; but they fell gently, as if beguiled by the strain; and looking around, Giovanni beheld the calm surface of the water dotted with various craft, and heard the long nervous strokes of the dumb man's paddle. "*Restate!*" he exclaimed, but the skiff was soon contiguous to a long line of advancing prows. Giovanni, in despair, could only hurl his signet ring through Camilla's lattice, before twenty eyes were marking his movements.

Weeks passed away, and the mysterious melody which had charmed Venice was hushed. No one beheld the sacred frequenter of the Adriatic waters; and conjecture was busy in weaving fables which should explain, without accounting for her disappearance. The gondoliers doubted not that her vow was completed, and that she had gone home; many sagely suggested that she had descended into a marine abode; and not a few believed that her mystic bark was riding, under the protection of St. Theodore, upon other and far distant seas. But all that was known was the fact of her departure; and like every event of joy or sorrow of terrestrial occurrence, when wondered at a little time, it was seemingly uncared for and forgotten.

"Now Heaven grant that my learned cousin be not fearful of crossing the Bridge of Sighs to-

night!" said the vivacious heiress of Monforti, as she encountered Giovanni in the corridor.

"And why should my fair Ellena dream of such a catastrophe?" inquired the youth.

"For want of any more probable way of accounting for thy sober visage," she replied, in a rallying tone.

"Thou art ever thus sportive, *cara*," he returned, observing her with interest; "*Felice voi!*" "Come to the saloon, after consulting yon reverend oracle, Giovanni, and perchance my guests or poor self can cheer even thee."

He smiled his thanks, and passing on, entered the cabinet of Father Teodoro.

"My son," said the priest, after greeting his visitor, "knowest thou how it fares with Foscarini now?"

"The fever has left him, I am told," answered Giovanni.

"*Grazie a Dio!*" ejaculated the old man, as he drew aside the heavy folds of a curtain, and admitted the chastened light and soothing breeze of even-time into the apartment; "but Giovanni, thou art ill," he continued, regarding the flushed countenance and troubled expression of his young friend; "beware that thou art not added to the list."

"Only fatigued. If I remember right, we were speaking yesterday of sympathy. Father, I have thought much, in the night-watches, of thy theory. One is not to expect to be under-

stood by the multitude; some will be even misinterpreted by the few, thou sayest. I know how different thou art from thy brethren in many things, and therefore will I venture a question: Is what is called love-at-first-sight, one of the *dreams* thou spakest of?"

"What is thus called, Giovanni, is often but a fancy."

"But is there a foundation for such an experience in the soul?"

"My son, there is deep affinity between spirits, even when humanly embodied. When two beings thus pre-united meet on earth, they spontaneously recognize their unity; and this is love in its purity and power."

"And, father, suppose, from the intervention of circumstances, they follow not out the intimation; suppose they remain disunited, dissevered?"

"They irretrievably wrong themselves; their being wants completeness; there remains a void in their bosoms; wealth and honors may occupy, qualified affection amuse, but neither can satisfy them."

"But, father, are the indications sure?"

"Infallible to the unperturbed; not indistinct to any who can feel or will think."

Filled as was the breast of Deltini with the spirit of meditation, and necessary as repose had become to his languid though fevered frame, he was mindful of his cousin's invitation, and

wished not to leave her palace without indicating at least his remembrance of her wishes. Yet was he greatly indisposed for general society, and hoped, by stealing in at a side door, to hold a moment's parley with her, and retire. The first sound which struck his ear, as he entered unobserved, was his father's voice. He hesitated, and saw that a group, among which he recognized a brother of the sick Foscarini, and several senators, were engaged in a conference of great apparent interest. "Yes, signor," said the elder Deltini, addressing the latter personage, "Giacomo's convalescence is truly a subject of congratulation among all who hold Venice dear. The time is coming when she will need the unimpaired energy of all her children. In the strength of her nobility at home, we are to trust, and not in the extent of her external possessions. With more care than ever should we consolidate the patrician power. I am already negotiating an alliance for Giovanni, which even thou, signor, wilt deem no small effort of state policy."

The individual most interested in this newly-broached design, paused only to note the complacency and determination with which the duty of the parent was thus lost in that of the patriot, and then hastened to cool his throbbing temples in the night air, and still, if possible, the tumult in his bosom. * * * *

The gray light of early morning revealed the kneeling figure of an aged servant of the

cross, with his face buried in the drapery of a couch, on which one, stricken with disease, was restlessly extended, in the chamber of a Venetian palace. "It is as I feared," said the priest, rising. "Giovanni, thou hast the infection!"

"Art thou still beside me, father?"

"Yes, my son, and if earnest prayers can carry thee safely through this trial, thou art safe."

"Desire it not, father, as thou lovest me. Hear me ere this heated brain refuse its just office. Life is not desirable to Giovanni Deltini. I love; but days, weeks, months have past, and these eyes have not beheld the only being they can fondly contemplate. The weariness of disappointment has induced this malady. The same hour that revealed to me the justice of my passion, assured me it had been cherished in vain. Thy blessing and thy prayers, father, before this creeping lethargy overpowers me. I have thus spoken, that one may shed a tear over the tomb of the Deltinis for its new occupant, who knoweth something of the woes which reconcile him to death."

From the deep sleep that succeeded the attack of this peculiar Levantine epidemic, the sole heir of the honors and wealth of the Deltini family awoke with a degree of physical energy, and an absence of unfavorable symptoms, which warranted the medical attendants in asserting that the prospect of his recovery was flattering. Their

disappointment, however, was extreme, at finding no apparent improvement, after the lapse of several hours. The recurrence of strength and expressiveness, which had occurred at a similar stage in other instances, appeared not in this. Giovanni, indeed, gave evidence of consciousness, but the morbid apathy of sickness was alarmingly obvious.—Meantime the sudden illness of his child, the alternations of hope and fear, the mournful tone of the invalid's ravings, and the settled indifference to life which he evinced in lucid intervals—the course of the malady—the expected catastrophe—all combined to work a revolution in the father's heart. He *knew* his son for the first time. He heard from Father Teodoro the last rational words he had uttered, and solemnly pledged himself to consult only the peace of his child, should he recover. Of this, however, there seemed less and less probability. And the afternoon of the third day since the cessation of the fever, found the inmates of the palace in the same state of quiet but deep despondency. The affectionate *padre* was in attendance while Count Deltini slept. He had musingly watched, for an hour, the play of the chequered light upon the variegated and marble-like floor, when the voice of Pietro caused him to raise his head. "Father," said the old servant, "there is a youth in the hall—a Paduan, I think—who would fain look upon the face of our young master. Vainly

have I told him that he is nigh unto death, and cannot be seen. He demands admittance as a near friend of Signor Giovanni."

"It matters little," replied the priest; the poor youth will soon be beyond the reach of disturbance. Let the Paduan enter."

So intent was the afflicted confessor upon his own thoughts, that he was again lost in reverie in the lapse of a few moments, so that the visitor's step first aroused him to a consciousness of his presence. Notwithstanding the obscurity of the apartment, and the sadness of his spirit, the priest was struck with the gracefulness of the stranger's mien, and the delicate contour of his form. He bowed as the father turned toward him, but without doffing the cap of black velvet which shaded his face. Stealing, with an easy but subdued air, around the head of the couch, and taking a taper from the table, he slipped upon it a jewelled ring, and gently separating the curtains, passed it through upon the pillow, directly before the eyes of the sick man. The alarmed father had moved forward to check the proceeding, but was startled by a sudden movement and exclamation; and with no little surprise beheld his patient raise himself on his elbow, and glance inquiringly about the apartment.

"Thank Heaven! my son, thou appearest somewhat like thyself; what dost thou desire?"

"Father, are we alone?"

"There is a young man present, one of thy Paduan friends; but thou art not able to converse"——

"Good father, leave us, for a moment."

His careful and devoted friend hesitated; but re-assured by the bright gleam of intelligence visible in his eye, he entered an adjoining oratory, there to invoke the blessing of Heaven upon the reviving son of his adoption.

The sound of the count's earnest voice recalled him to the sick room. And there a scene presented itself, which would have been rife with inspiration to a true votary of the rainbow art. The invalid was in a half-sitting posture, his cheek slightly colored, and his brilliant eye bent upon the rich tresses of one who kneeled beside the couch. His father stood by, glancing benignantly from one to the other figure. Upon the damask covering lay the taper, upon which glistened the signet ring of the Deltinis. And the flush of sunset threw over the dark furniture, rich paintings, and polished floor, a variety of mellowed tints, which enhanced without generalizing the combined effect. The "Sad Bird of the Adriatic" had folded her wings in despair, and brooded over her desolate nest. The mother whose love sustained her was no more; and ere she followed her to her long rest, she went forth to behold once again the being of her dreams. Hoping to accomplish her object without being

known, she sought him, in disguise, in the public places of the city ; but learning his sickness, and not doubting its fatal issue, she hastened to assure him how speedy would be their reunion. She had proved an angel of mercy. Count Deltini had joined the hands of the lovers. And on the succeeding moment of delight, the priest had intruded. "It is a vision !" he exclaimed—"the daughter of my poor sister, and the son of my adoption !" He read an explanation in their eyes. "My children," he continued, "my prayers are granted, but no part was allotted me in their fulfilment."

"Father, thou errest," exclaimed Giovanni ; "thy lecture on the affinity of spirit revealed to me my love,"

"And, uncle," said Camilla, "at the name of Father Teodoro, I slipped the blind of my gondola."

It was the unhappiness of Giovanni to behold, and of his immediate descendants more nearly to realize the wane of Venetian glory. Yet many of his brother patricians, with less than his patriotic sensibility, as they walked away the night hours in their gorgeous halls, lamenting the vain sacrifice of their most individual prerogatives to ambitious policy, ardently longed for the lot of Deltini ; for the grief of the citizen was neutralized by the happiness of the man ;—and many an hour of joy was won to him by the melody and companionship of the then blithe *Bird of the Adriatic*.

THE ROSE-COLORED PACKET.

“Whom he had sensibility to love,
Ambition to attempt, and skill to win.”

SOOTHINGLY played the sunset breeze over the sleeping sea, laden with the perfume from the orange groves of Genoa. As the mellow light gilded the palace-roofs and domes of the old city, its aspect, to the imaginative spectator who gazed distantly from the ocean, was not unlike an ancient and splendid amphitheatre, with golden battlements, an azure canopy, and an arena of polished emerald. The quiet waters of the bay wore an air of unwonted solitude; and but a single vessel was moored in a position which indicated a speedy departure. This was a brigantine, of beautiful proportions—evidently one of the comparatively small, but singularly efficient craft, which supplied Britain with the finer fabrics of southern Europe. If the eye lingered unconsciously upon the symmetrical exterior of the “Sea-Nymph,” a glance at her occupants and equipments could not but speedily yield to a gaze

of earnestness and pleasure. The most prominent figure discernible upon her deck, was that of a young man clad in mariner's vestments, the quality of which indicated superiority of rank not more distinctly than did their perfect adaptation serve to discover superiority of form and strength. There was enough in the stranger's appearance to denote his English origin ; but other characteristics as readily suggested to an intelligent observer, that circumstances of birth or experience had modified the peculiarities so obvious in the sons of the north. A certain nervousness of temperament and latent warmth of feeling, were discoverable in the natural language of the seaman ; and as the light puffs of air, ever and anon, threw back the side-locks from his uncovered head, the disciple of a beautiful but misinterpreted science would have noticed the cause of the bland complacency which rested on his countenance, as his eye roved over the surrounding scene. The breadth of the brow indicated a large endowment of ideality, to the delight of which that fairy-like picture was now silently ministering. The mother of Captain Roberto was a native of Spain ; and neither the qualities of his Albion father, which he largely inherited, nor a boyhood spent amid the fogs of the island, had sufficed to eradicate the southern leaven from his nature. Earlier, by several years, than ordinary prudence would warrant, he had been entrusted with a large interest in the

trade in which he was then engaged. For him, it had many and peculiar charms. His latent affinity with the region of his mother's nativity found free scope during his frequent sojourns in the cities and *campagna* of the Mediterranean coast; and in every port there were those who welcomed the "Sea-Nymph" and her gallant commander, with a greeting such as seldom cheers the arrival of foreign merchantmen.

"I think the lad has started, yonder," said the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir," replied his second in command, turning his eye towards the shipping.

"A slacker boy than Zed would have lingered longer on his last land errand."

In a few moments the boat, propelled gently on by the skilful arm of the young sailor, touched the vessel's side, and he stood, hat in hand, before his commander.

"All's right," observed that functionary, taking a small file of papers from the boy, and hastily glancing at their contents; "and had ye brought a good breeze with ye, Zed, we would see how much nearer the Straits the dawn would find us."

"Your honor knows that Zed would ever be the bearer of pleasant things;" and drawing from his vest a small pink packet, he presented it, with unusual obeisance, whereby—as the quick eye of Roberto was not slow to detect—the lad

hoped to conceal the arch smile that was playing on his lip.

"Whence this?" exclaimed the captain, with an air of surprise.

"It was left at the consignee's, an hour since, sir;" and so saying, he retreated among his messmates.

Nicholas Vanblunt, the mate of the "Sea-Nymph," possessed the numerous solid excellencies which characterized his Dutch progenitors. Indeed, if the truth must be told, the prudent partners of Roberto had connived to secure the old man the berth he enjoyed—deeming his caution and judicious timidity well fitted to neutralize the action of the captain's more mercurial nature; and they were wont, in private converse, to yclep Vanblunt the ballast of their enterprises, and Roberto the sails;—the one ever advocating steadiness, and preferring perfect immobility to the least risk; the other striving to catch every breeze of fortune, and carry some canvass even in a tempest. One quickening impulse, however, occasionally wakened into temporary vivacity the energies of Nicholas; this was that restless appetite, of mother Eve memory, denominated curiosity; and, had one seen the start and the gaze, which the phenomenon of the rose-colored packet gave rise to, he would have thought that the Netherlands had suddenly become visible over the bow of the brigantine. The effect

which the epistle produced upon the demeanor of Roberto, was well calculated still farther to excite the inquisitive spirit of his mate. He dwelt long and curiously upon the superscription; and the listless manner in which he broke the seal, was strongly contrasted with the expression of intense interest which its contents awakened. He read; then walked the deck and read again; now he turned his eyes intently upon some inland object, and now surveyed, with anxious circumspection, the hues of the horizon; he smiled as the breeze evidently freshened, and glanced complacently over the garniture of his vessel; then resuming his walk, he hummed musingly a Spanish air, till the flutter of the paper seemed to awaken his mind from its abstraction; once again he read, then carefully refolding and depositing it in his bosom, he murmured, yet in a tone of resolution—"It shall be done!"

"What, sir?" ejaculated the impatient Nicholas, at his elbow.

"A trifle, in the way of business on shore. Harkee, Mr. Vanblunt, send Zed, with the small boat and two lads, alongside; loosen the sheets and make all ready; in five minutes after my return, we must be off."

Roberto hastened to the cabin; and Nicholas, having given orders agreeable to his instructions, returned to his post, determined, on the captain's re-appearance, to learn the occasion of these unexpected movements.

"Any news of import?" he asked.

"No, Mr. Vanblunt, not a word."

"Are the invoices all on board, sir?"

"Yes; you can examine them below."

"But, captain"——

"What?" stopping and looking up, as he descended the vessel's side.

"The—the rose-colored packet, sir?"

"Oh! I will tell you all about it."

"Do, sir," winningly exclaimed Nicholas, leaning over in fond expectation.

"On my return," dryly added Roberto, as he dropped into the boat, and, in an urgent though low tone, bade the oarsmen "pull away." Before the disappointed mate could rally from his discomfiture, their long and vigorous strokes had borne their commander to a distance which precluded any but a vociferous renewal of the interview.

The business which thus unexpectedly called on shore the captain of the "Sea-Nymph," was of that species with regard to which experience had taught him it was well to postpone consulting his reflecting brother officer. He made it a rule, indeed, to take counsel with that worthy on all occasions of mutual concernment; but chose to exercise his private judgment in fixing the *time* for presenting certain subjects to the veteran's consideration—having often found his opinion, on questions of expediency, less troublesome after than before the said questions were experi-

mentally settled. Accordingly, he already anticipated many long discussions with Nicholas, relative to the rose-colored packet, but not till his own view of the matter had been practically adopted.

Leaving the anxious Hollander to superintend the preparations for the speedy departure of the brigantine, let us follow her small boat and learn what is writ on the rosy scroll, against which the Anglo-Spaniard's noble heart is beating with benevolent expectancy. The delicacy of the characters betray the hand of woman; and the elegant Italian, in which the epistle is couched, evince more than ordinary cultivation. In homely English, it would read thus :

“To the captain of the Sea-Nymph :

“The writer of this has been, almost from her earliest recollection, a denizen of the convent of St. Agatha. She has gazed often from the tower above, forth upon the beautiful city, and out upon the bright sea ; she has heard the festal cries of the Genoese, and the song of the mariners from the bay ; she has noted the glad faces of the young gentry and the happy countenances of the peasants, as they have passed along the adjacent road ; and these things have awakened in her soul the desire of freedom. The thought has been cherished till it has become a passion and a necessity. She has read much of the honor and generosity of Englishmen. Thrice has she

marked thy distant vessel; but, until this hour, knew not by what title to address thee. She now appeals to the captain of the Sea-Nymph for deliverance and protection. 'Three hours after vespers, a blue cord will be dropped from the third window of the farther wing of the convent. Wilt thou be there to rescue an involuntary nun? and shall the Sea-Nymph bear her to the free shores of England? *In nomine Dei Patri, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti*, thou art invoked to compassionate

VIOLA DONATELLI."

The long, delicious twilight, peculiar to southern latitudes, was fast yielding to the deeper shades and more solemn effulgence of night. The lovely daughters of Genoa again welcomed their evening pastimes. The cheerful hum of the *conversazione*, the rich music of Italian song, and even the low notes of a guitar, ever and anon echoed along the terrace-groves, or stole out from among the garden-shrubbery of the street of palaces. A day of uncommon sultriness had rendered the cool and tranquil even-time doubly grateful. Yet the new-born breeze, sweetly musical as it was within the city and by the sea-side, stirred, with something of wildness, amid the rank grass that clustered about the foundation of a massive pile which arose loftily, beyond the suburbs. Its anterior wall cast a gigantic shadow over the solitary fields; and nought but the white habiliments would have betrayed a

figure, which, in a crouching attitude, was slowly following the line of its base. Suddenly it seemed to spring forward, and presently the gleam of a lantern revealed the captain of the "Sea-Nymph" hastening towards Zed, who was drawing from among the vines the tessellated extremity of a silken rope. To this, a light but strong ladder of cordage was attached and drawn upward. Roberto soon felt the cords tremble in his grasp, as he endeavored to steady them. "*Corragio!*" he whispered, as a light female form dropped gently among the weeds at his feet, and knelt down, with folded arms and an upward gaze, as if witless of his presence. He quietly raised the lantern, and its feeble rays fell on features of that indescribable saint-like beauty with which the traveller occasionally meets, among the *religieuse* of the continent. The freshness of youth combined with the sacred ardor of devotion to vivify their expression, and the excitement of the occasion tended to deepen the impression which the vision—for such it seemed—made upon the ardent mind of the young seaman. He inwardly rejoiced, yet with something of awe, that the enterprise was undertaken, and felt nerved for its fulfilment. Zed suddenly pointed to the ladder, and to his dismay, the captain beheld another and seemingly decrepit female slowly descending. His exclamation recalled the nun from her reverie. Rising, she

anxiously surveyed the countenance of Roberto; then softly murmured—"Viola confides in one above and thee. Fear not; yonder comes the only other being whom I can call friend on earth; finding me resolute, she has determined to accompany me."

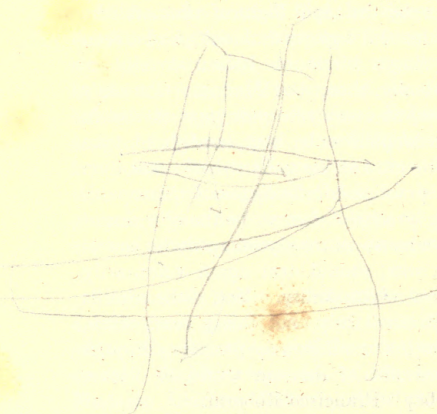
Roberto was sadly perplexed at this information; but his cogitations on the subject were quickly interrupted by a cry of alarm, and the next moment the unfortunate *donna* fell groaning at the foot of the ladder. Snatching a cloak from the arms of Zed, he threw it around the fair being beside him, and lifting her on his shoulder, ran with wonderful rapidity, followed by the sailor-boy. The cries of the fallen dame echoed through the solitude. Roberto pressed onward in silence, nor paused till he reached the last point whence the convent was discernible; then gazing momentarily back, he beheld lights gleaming from twenty windows, and fancied the cries of pursuers, borne on the rising wind.

Hadst thou, gentle reader, while rustivating, at a subsequent period, at one of the most beautiful villages in the vicinity of London, unexpectedly entered the drawing-room of the accomplished Madame Clarissa Roberto, thou wouldst have seen, among that lady's fair-haired and blue-eyed daughters, a flower not less pleasing to contemplate, though evidently exotic. But it would be

only by patient attention, that, in the cheerful and womanly beauty of the stranger, thou couldst discover any especial semblance to the lovely apostate who, three years before, prayed for forgiveness beneath the walls of St. Agatha. Yet were it thy privilege to linger beside her—to mark the sweet *naïveté* with which she uttered the accents of the Anglo-Saxon, kindle her expressiveness by appeals to her enthusiasm, or drink the melody of her song; when the wand of the enchanter was no longer visibly swayed, thou wouldst learn, by the rapid flight of time and the lingering of the soul's glow, that thou hadst been within the magic circle of Italian loveliness. Who can wonder, then, that Madame Clarissa's noble nephew, on every return voyage, tarried in the noisy metropolis only long enough to take every requisite care of his gallant bark, and then hastened to practice *la bella lingua Italiana* with his charming *protégé*? It may be thought singular that one who so narrowly escaped the consequences of a vow, should ever again voluntarily assume such a responsibility. Yet, if the records of the parish say truly, not many years since, Viola Donatelli did religiously promise, through all the vicissitudes of this our world, to "love, honor and obey" Francisco Roberto.

Prosperity has followed the captain of the "Sea-Nymph," and that title is displaced by a nobler; happiness dwells with the nun of St,

Agatha, and that appellation is no longer hers. Yet, often do their wondering children look up, from the sports of infancy, to mark the grateful tears with which their parents speak of the *Rose-Colored Packet*.



THE FLORENTINE.

CHAPTER I.

“Wilt thou be gone ? Sweet Valentine, adieu !
Wish me partaker in thy happiness
When thou dost meet good hap ; and, in thy danger,
If ever danger do environ thee,
Commend thy grievance to my holy prayers,
For I will be thy beadsman, Valentine.”

“LET us forth, Anina,” said Antonio to his betrothed, who was seated, in a pensive attitude, near the window, and feigning to watch the coming on of evening over the sky, though the tears which filled her eyes might have betrayed, to a nearer observer, that the object of her vision was meditative and within.—“Let us forth, and if the eve of parting cannot be joyous, our sadness will not be increased if its hours be passed in rambling where we have been wont, at this very hour, to yield up our spirits, in glad unison, to the blest influences of nature. Let me once more renew the brightest associations of my being, in beholding, with the clear perception of expectant separa-

tion, the river's bank, whereon I vented, in sportive glee, the gay spirit of boyhood; the square where, with the music of the Pergola just dying on my ear, I have so often paused, in the still air of midnight, and fancied that the old statues moved in the gloom,—and the garden, ay, the garden-mount, whence we have gazed beyond the cypress grove and the river, and seen the sun go down behind the hills; in these scenes, which I am so soon to exchange for a strange country, let us linger away the moments, till the hour approaches which calls me from Florence and from thee!"

They were soon threading the gaily-peopled walk of the Caccine, their desultory converse or silent musings being, ever and anon, interrupted by the passing salutation of numerous acquaintances. Occasionally, too, a friend, mindful of Antonio's approaching departure, would leave the party whose companionship was enlivening the evening promenade, accompany them for a space, and then, with a *buona sera*, uttered with more than usual tenderness, and that expressive though silent indication of delicate sympathy which distinguishes the natural language of the Tuscans, glide away from the thoughtful pair. They experienced a sensation of relief when the shades of evening advanced, and the walk became more solitary. At that season, even the kindly words of friendship disturbed rather than solaced. The moonlight fell in soothing luxuriance upon the

almost inaudible ripple of the Arno, as they approached one of the bridges which span its waters. There are memorable instances of *effect* produced by the combination and mutual influence of nature and art. One of the most beautiful imaginable now, familiar though it was, arrested the attention of Anina and her companion. The bridge of Santa Trinita, in the light which now revealed it, seemed suspended by the spell of fancy, rather than supported by deeply laid pillars and massive workmanship. So symmetrically and gracefully are hung its arches, that the idea of weight is banished from the mind of the spectator. Its aerial form, antiquated hue, and white escutcheons, about which the weeds of age are clustered, form an image that serves admirably to relieve the aspect of the heavier architecture around.

They paused, and, leaning upon the parapet, Anina broke the silence which they had almost involuntarily suffered to prevail. "I know not how it is, Antonio, but this spot seems singularly associated with the prominent shades of my destiny. Do you remember the story my old nurse tells? One evening she was conveying me home from the Porta Fedriano, where we had been to see the cavalcade of the Duke; we did not leave the house of Signor Andrea, from the window of which we had seen the pageant, until the crowd had quite dispersed. Yet the Lung' Arno was quite thronged, and several gentlemen on horse-

back were reining in their steeds here upon the bridge, and endeavoring to make their way harmlessly through the throng. Poor Bianca was hurrying on to avoid danger—when I persisted in stopping to drop a *crazia* into the old *poverino's* hat. Meantime the tumult increased; a carriage, in addition to the crowd, now blocked up the way; the horses became more restive, and volumes of sparks flashed from the polished flags beneath their feet. Bianca, murmuring our old proverb, *uomini sopra cavalli, sepolti sono aperti*,* drew me from the expectant beggar, and was hastily carrying me forward, when the carriage started, and the Count P.'s horse, notwithstanding the curb, sprang after it, and threw Bianca and her unruly burden upon the pavement. The Count instantly dismounted, and leaving his horse with a groom, hastened toward me. Bianca was more alarmed than injured; but I was taken up insensible. At this sight he seemed deeply distressed, and taking me in his arms, bore me directly to the *Caffé di Colonna*. The restoratives applied restored me; and, to the relief of the Count, I was soon on my way home, forgetting, in contemplating the comfits he had given me, the slight contusion which the accident had occasioned. You know the consequence of this event—how the kind-hearted man visited us the next day, and through

* “When men are on horseback, the graves are opened”—alluding to the liability to accident incident to the smooth pavement of the city.

his influence with the Duke, obtained for my brother the office which has since so comfortably supported us. Nor is this all, my Tonino; here, on this bridge, at such an hour"—

"Were our vows first plighted!"—exclaimed Antonio; "and, O Anina, let the memory of all we are to each other come over us anew, now that from this green spot of life we gaze over the desert of absence. Strange! alas, how strange, that necessity thus forces me forth from my home; and such a home! Before I knew thee, Anina, I knew not myself. The external, the exciting, the whirl of passion—this was what I called life. The fountains around me were perverted by the lips they would have refreshed. Nature!—her voice was lost. Music!—I loved only her most tragic inspiration; the pathos—the soft, stealing melody which delights me now, then but irritated and inflamed. I was a wanderer in a wild scene, such as Salvator loved to depict; a light step aroused me—I looked up—and in the light of thine eye a new world opened;—the peaceful yet deep sense of joy which comes over the soul when pondering on one of the Madonnas of Raffaello, played around my heart, and threw the rosy quiet of a summer evening over the restless deep within. Wonder not that I hasten from thee with forebodings—that I mourn that my day of peace is so soon to be superseded by one of lone travailing—for thou knowest my impetuous spirit must unfold itself. Thy memory,

the hope of return, confidence in the love of such a heart—will such consolations ever fail or disappoint me?”

Anina had listened in the attitude and with the expression of one in whose mind a prevailing sentiment precluded the admission of minor emotions. She had lifted her gaze from the glittering element below as he proceeded; the constrained smile, and disposition to withdraw her own and his thoughts from dismal anticipations, which had pervaded her manner at the commencement of the interview, now gave place to an expression indicative of high purpose. Her Tuscan hat shaded without obscuring her features, as she stood erect in the full light of the careering luminary. She was above the ordinary height of the women of her country, and her figure, when in repose, might have suggested to the experienced eye of a continental sojourner, the idea of a more northern extraction than she boasted. Her dress, too, with the exception of the hat, bore no distinctive indications whereby a stranger could have directly surmised that she claimed affinity with the denizens of the Etrurian Athens. But one glance at the countenance would have dispelled the illusion of the casual observer. The complexion, the hair, and, above all, the peculiar depth and expressive fire of the eye, proclaimed Anina a legitimate daughter of Italy.

“Antonio,” she replied, “there is nothing but he thought of what we shall gain by this separa-

tion, that, with the blessing of the Virgin, enables me to think of it calmly. I feel that my presence has proved but a sad inspiration to your pencil; and when I remember what was prophesied of your genius, but a year since, I feel almost as if expiating a sin in resigning you to the full influence of absence from everything which will enervate the energy, or distract the attention of your mind; *then* I feel it will pour itself forth in the exercise of your art; and who may predict the result? This—this must comfort me, when left to abide ceaseless opposition, while my Tonino is winning afar what will satisfy the views of others, though it cannot alter my own; there, if ever he gives a thought, amid his busy hours, to—to ”—— and at the mere idea of her lover’s forgetfulness, she passed, Italian-like, from a high and womanly seeming, to the distrustful sadness of a child;—she abruptly paused, and the tears flowed freely. It was now for Antonio to rise to a higher strain of feeling. With the ardent gesture and impassioned utterance characteristic of his country, he soon unburthened his oppressed heart, and changed the mood of the listener. “And now, Anina,” he continued, “let us move homeward. Forget not, twice every month, to place in the hands of our faithful Ipolito tidings of your welfare, which will steal like rays of sunlight across my solitary pathway;—nor shall the old man fail to bring thee tokens of the fidelity and experience of thy betrothed. Let us go.”

They left the bridge; and the first glimmering of dawn found Antonio sitting, accoutred as a traveller, his passport beside him, his trunk at his feet, and himself inditing yet another *addio* to one who, at that moment, was looking tearfully from her casement, starting at the distant rumbling of a *vettura* rolling along the deserted streets, and as it died away, breathing a prayer for the safe return of her lover.

CHAPTER II.

“It cannot take away the grace of life,
The comeliness of look that virtue gives,
Her port erect with consciousness of truth,
Her rich attire of honorable deeds;—
It cannot lay its hand on these, no more
Than it can pluck its brightness from the sun,
Or, with polluted finger—tarnish it.”

FROM the little metropolis of Tuscany—the birth-place of Dante, Boccacio, and Machiavelli, let us pass to an abiding-place of man less blessed by contiguity to the grand and beautiful in nature, and from among its multitudinous representatives of humanity, seek out and note the few individuals with whom our story is connected. The first scene breathes not the air of the outer and

common London world. It is a richly furnished chamber; the quiet that reigns, and every little arrangement, suggests, at once, that it is the chamber of sickness; but the abandoned couch and the attitudes of the occupants, assure us that the crisis of disease has passed, or is yet to come. Upon a rich arm-chair reclines one whose gray hair and slightly furrowed brow speak either of a long or laborious life—perhaps of both;—the compressed lip and unyielding manner in which the head accommodates itself to its comfortable support, bespeaks a pertinacity of will, a firmness of purpose, that even bodily weakness has failed to subjugate. At a light and exquisitely wrought table beside the convalescent—for such he is—sits one of those beings which, in certain moods, a meditative man would rather gaze upon than aught else in the wide world. Mary Ellmsley might not be called what is generally understood by the term beauty; she was too small in figure, too mild in manner, too thoughtful in expression, to win the admiration of fashion's votary, or attract the attention of the amateur observer of the world's inhabitants. And yet there was something in her very gentleness, something in her full blue eye, fair complexion, and light tresses, "brown in the shadow and gold in the sun," contrasted with the mourning habiliments in which she was clad, that insensibly charmed. A lover of Wordsworth's poetry, a partaker of Wordsworth's spirit, would have felt spontaneously and

irresistibly interested as he beheld her. At a slight movement of the sick man, indicating his revival from the half-sleeping state in which he had remained for some time, she arose, and stepping, fairy-like, about the room, seemed to busy herself in some little preparations for the invalid's comfort; but, now and then, she would steal an anxious glance toward him; and when she saw that his eye was following her motions, she abruptly returned to her seat, and again bent over the book upon which she had previously been intent. But her gaze was fixed, and it was plain her mind was busied inwardly; and the subject of her musing could not have been altogether pleasing, for her fingers mechanically thrummed upon the table, and twice she opened her lips to speak, and then, with an embarrassed and conscious air, checked herself. At length, in a decisive manner, she closed the volume and placed it away with some little care, and breathing a half-suppressed sigh, drew her chair nearer to the cheerful grate, and looked up to the face of the invalid.

"You need not grieve, Mary, for the troubles of the heroine of that tale," said the old man; "you know, as a matter of course, all must turn out well at last."

"All is well with her now," she replied, "for the groundless suspicions of man cannot harm him who is favored of God; and so ought Micol to feel, and therein be comforted."

"An odd name that for a heroine, Mary; but novelists must be sadly puzzled, now-a-days, both for names and subjects."

"The author of the volume I have been reading depended little upon such externals. His whole mind is given to developing his characters and plot, and polishing the language in which both are portrayed; at least so Mr.—I mean, so I believe;—for, in truth, I have not read enough yet to understand perfectly."

"Pray, what is this wonderful book? I thought you were in the midst of the new novel Lady Emily sent this morning."

"I was trying to read something I began some time ago, father, but which I was prevented from going on with by circumstances—by your unexpected illness, I should say; but I can't get along with it now; I could not well understand it, and perhaps if I did, I could not have read"—

"What could n't you understand, child; what was you *trying* to read?"

"Alfieri's Saul, father."

"If you had comprehended it, why could you not read?"

"My tears blinded me, father."

"I really begin to believe, Mary, that I have been to blame in allowing you to share so long my confinement; you need the fresh air, child. What with our late affliction, (and here the old gentleman brushed away a tear,) and the dull duty of attending on a sick old man's humors,

you are scarcely yourself, girl,—crying over a story you do not understand!—Nonsense”——

“Oh, father, you mistake; it was n’t the story that made me weep; but I read on a little way, and came to a difficult part, and then I—I thought”——

“The meaning would come by your crying?”

“No, father, I thought who would tell me all about it, and thinking of that made me weep.”

“Worse and worse; who do you mean? who would explain?”

“Mr.”—and she looked fearfully up—“Mr. Lino, father.”

The pale cheek of the convalescent was now sallow; his features worked impatiently, and he sat erect. “Did I not forbid you to breathe the name of that accursed man?” he fiercely exclaimed. “How can you speak of him without a shudder, when you remember the peril into which his villanous arts brought me? Have you no feeling for your own kin? Can you look upon me, but just escaped from a violent and awful death, and not *feel*?”

“Father, he may be innocent,” Mary sobbed out.

“*May be innocent?* You saw the cunning smile with which he proffered the treacherous gift; you heard the professor declare that he had detected poison; you witnessed the convulsions, the death-like stupor”——

“Oh, speak not of them, my father! But had we not better ask him about it? I am sure he knew not”——

“Mary,” he continued more calmly, “you are but a child; I will once more explain, for your satisfaction, the reasons of my conduct, and then I shall expect you, as a reasonable girl, to cease, henceforth and forever, to allude to a subject which, in your father’s mind, is associated with the most painful remembrances. I received Mr. Lino as your teacher, with no recommendation but the impression made upon me by his appearance. In this I was indeed to blame; but my interest was highly excited; I thought I befriended a noble spirit—an exile from a depressed yet glorious country. I received the Tuscan wines, not wishing to refuse what was offered as a token of friendship. Happily in my own person I first experienced the workings of the insidious poison, and prompt medical aid has availed where it well might have despaired. And I live—live to punish a villain—live to make an example of one of the thousand specious renegades from the continent, who insinuate themselves into the homes of Englishmen, to abuse their hospitality, to overreach, ay, and to work their ruin!”

“What possible motive could have induced even the thought of such an act?”

“Do you suppose I shall tax my imagination to discover the motives of a treacherous Italian? I leave all such labor to the law. Let it have

its course. I have done my duty to myself and my country."

"But not to the exile, father!—Do but see him; perhaps he can explain."

"I am not equal to a visit to the Old Bailey, to-night, Mary."

His gentle auditor started back, and burst into tears; she knew not of the arrest. But soon recovering, she lifted up her face to that of her parent, who beheld, with surprise, an expression of dignified and wounded feeling, such as he had never witnessed before.

"Father! my mother used often to speak to me of one who, in the agony of a cruel death, said prayerfully of his enemies, "*they know not what they do*"—and she bade me thus ever feel toward whomsoever I should deem wrongful or unkind. Father, forgive me!—*you* know not what you do. I feel that the stranger is not guilty of the awful crime with which he is charged. It cannot be—the impression you first received is true; he is a nobleman in soul. Oh, suffer not such a spirit to be wounded. But I fear not for him, for he has told me that all great minds are renewed by trial, and gather strength from persecution. He has told me of a philosopher of his country who was shut up in a dungeon because he declared that the earth went round the sun; and about a poet whom they called mad, and imprisoned away from the fields and bright sunlight which he loved, and then he became mad indeed.

I weep not for him, father; but in the pleasant home of his youth, there is one who will shed grievous tears, when the dismal tidings arrive. I mourn for her. Father! forget your anger; and to know that he whom thou falsely deemest thine enemy is free, his reputation unsullied, and his betrothed unstricken, will prove to thee more reviving than the bitter cup of revenge. Father! forgive me. Vain, I see, are the words of your Mary. May God protect the Italian, for he is guiltless!"

A week subsequent to the conversation we have related, toward the close of day, a young man sat with folded arms and a riveted gaze, in an apartment which, in the twilight that then revealed it, presented an aspect of stern solidity, yet not devoid of comfort. An easel rested against the wall; a pallet, with some painting utensils, lay confusedly upon the floor, and a few books were scattered upon a small table. "Yes, Anina spake well and truly"—soliloquized the occupant. "I did need separation. I did require a pressure from without, or a void around me to quicken the impulses within. I have lamented this catastrophe, I have bitterly scorned this disgrace, long enough. And now I will wrench sublime consolation from the very gloom of misfortune. I have done all that can be done. Ere this, Ipolito must have received my letter.

True, he knows not that I am an incarcerated man, but he knows the suspicions under which I am placed; he will obtain the needful testimonials; he will keep the circumstance from Anina; the trial will at length come on—I shall be, I must be, triumphantly acquitted, and none will recognize in my English appellation the name of Antonio. And, meantime, I have succeeded in effecting my purpose, (and he looked complacently upon the materials of his art)—here is light, and something of quiet. Oh, that the vision of yesternight would return! I must transfix it—I must embody the idea. Yes, ere long the face of my beloved shall beam upon me, even in this prison. I feel that I shall succeed. They have taken my liberty—but the mind is free! Oh, for the morning light! I yearn for day. Let me reflect. A beautiful nun listening to the Miserere,—the attitude that of a suppliant, the eye tearful, ay, but enraptured by the melody, and raised in devotion, like Raphael's St. Cecilia; the expression with a shade of sadness, but impassioned—exalted; and the model—ah! the model shall be Anina!"

CHAPTER III.

“Still o’er them floated an inspiring breath—
The odor and the atmosphere of song.”

THE rays of sunlight fell obliquely upon the Lung’ Arno, where a goodly concourse were moving to and fro, or conversing in stationary groups. It was evidently one of those days when the Italian yields himself, with especial freedom, to the “*dolce far niente*.” Nodding and smiling, with a *buona festa* for as many of the gay throng as glanced at her playful demeanor, the flower-girl distributed her violets embedded in leaves of geranium; the blind man touched his guitar, while an urchin beside him accompanied the monotonous strains with the constant invocation “*dartemi qualchecosa*,” and the licensed pauper rattled his tin cup, and implored the lightsome beings who glided by—“*per amore di Dio*”—to give of their substance. The equipage of the Grand Duke passed rapidly from the palace toward the Caccine; but the Grand Duke himself preferred a promenade to a ride with the ladies of his household, as one might learn from the universal and respectful recognition manifested by the crowd of pedestrians toward the gentleman in a brown coat, so plainly fashioned, that it would infallibly obtain for him the cognomen of Quaker,

in certain localities far beyond the limits of his own little duchy. Two disputants, beginning to perceive that their war of words was becoming too obstreperous for the scene and occasion, hastily emerged from the crowd into an open and comparatively vacant square, in order to renew their colloquy at ease. Thither we will follow.

"Mark me, Carlo, I speak of the action, the expression, the performance throughout, and I speak of Ronzi when she is herself."

"And *then* you will persist, Luigi, in maintaining that Malibran is surpassed in the Norma?"

"That will I, *caro mio*, against whoever will gainsay it."

"Thou hast then undertaken to oppose thy single judgment to the universal sentiment. Hast heard of Garcia's adventure at Arezzo?"

"And was not I one of the torch-bearing multitude that attended *cara* Ronzi home from the Pergola? But to the point, *amico mio*; didst thou not perceive, last night, in her speaking countenance, every minute shade of varying expression? Did not her commanding figure, dignified air, eloquent eyes, and, above all, her mellifluous voice, bring home to thee most touchingly the passionate ideas involved in the Norma?"

"I tell thee, Luigi, that Italy has settled the question; thou art dreaming of Ronzi as she

was. Malibran is in her prime, and Europe has awarded her the palm."

"There are those in Florence, Carlo, without the precincts of thy wine-shop, who would contend with thee on that point."

"Not one, save thyself, Luigi."

"*Santissima Virgine!* there was but one voice in the parterre, on the first representation."

"Ah, *poverino!* thy wits are unsettled by music; thus thou speakest of each *prima donna* in turn; she is always better than all who preceded. But, *caro*, thou shalt not make all Firenze share thy perversity. Nay, have patience; thou shalt be convinced. If the first passer-by who hath seen the Norma, as performed by both, doth not agree with me, then Carlo Pisani will do thy bidding, so that it be not to displease a customer, nor to break law."

"I am content."

"Here is a grave and stately cavalier;—ah, he would light his cigar." "Ecco Signor," said Carlo, approaching the stranger, and proffering his flint;—"Signor, canst say if there will be any necessity for entering the parterre an hour before the time, to-night?"

"Is not the Norma inimitably executed?" said Luigi.

"I have so seen it."

"And by La Malibran?" inquired Carlo.

"By her superior in that character, at least," was the reply.

"Bravo!" exclaimed Luigi. "There, Carlo," he added triumphantly, "you see De Begnis has one more votary."

"That one is not me," said the cavalier.

It was now Luigi's turn to feel disappointed. "Prithee, Signor," he continued, "who dost thou think is inimitable in the Norma?"

"Signora Pasta."

"Excuse me, you are a"—

"Milanese," replied the stately gentleman, as he walked away, complacently exhaling the fragrant smoke.

The smile and the shrug of the amused friends were scarcely enacted with true Italian expressiveness, when their attention was directed to the advancing figure of a primly attired old man. Luigi recognized him as an acquaintance from Prato; and after they had interchanged a greeting, asked if he had visited the city to attend the opera.

"Not altogether," he answered.

Carlo felt again encouraged.

"Doubtless," continued Luigi, "you think our *prima donna* cannot be sufficiently admired?"

"I ne'er knew but one of whom I could thus speak," said the old gentleman, "and she is yonder."

"At rehearsal?" asked Luigi, hopefully.

"Does Catalani rehearse for her private entertainments? I had thought that, in her villa in the environs, music was wholly a pastime."

"*C'e caduto il formaggio su macaroni*," * said Carlo, pointing to the opposite street. "Here comes Signor Bartolomeo, who, thou well knowest, is uninfluenced by local prejudice, and not so old as to sympathize only in retired opera performers; for thy comfort, too, know, Luigi, that he is a connoisseur in dramatic as well as in musical efforts."

"And thou art not aware of his opinion of Ronzi?"

"Only generally, and not in the Norma."

"Pardon, Signor," said Luigi, as he took the hand of the new comer, "tell me how you are pleased with Bellini's new opera and its present representation."

"It is a glorious thing; and who can do it greater justice than the still beautiful"——

"Malibran Garcia," interrupted Carlo.

"Ronzi de Begnis," exclaimed Bartolomeo.

"Name thy requirement," said Carlo, looking impatiently at Luigi.

"To-morrow," said his friend, smilingly; I must consider; but fear not. I shall not be very severe; and, for the present, *addio*."

Ascending one of the neighboring elevations, whence is obtainable an extensive view embra-

* "The cheese has fallen on the macaroni," i. e. a desirable coincidence has occurred. When we consider in what esteem this article of food is held by the Italians, and how indispensable is deemed the addition of grated cheese, the force of the proverb is obvious.

cing the thickly clustered dwellings of Florence, her mammoth Duomo, and the adjoining and encircling Apennine, Luigi came upon a quiet road walled on one side, and overlooking, on the other, a broad valley covered with olive trees, and containing several villas and small dwellings. Here, during most of the day, the sun exerts its full influence, and the walled hill-side shields the solitary road from the wind; and here, in view of the soothing landscape, an elderly and somewhat portly man, with a countenance bland in its aspect, though slightly shaded with seriousness, was enjoying a retired promenade. He was so occupied with his own thoughts, as not to be aware of Luigi's presence until the latter had audibly saluted him.

"One would think, Signor Ipolito, that thou wert not the guardian of Firenze's fairest daughter, judging from thy sober visage and unwontedly lonely walk."

"And it may be, Luigi mio, that what thou deemest a consoling office, (and God knows it hath been,) can become the occasion of anxious musings."

"Has aught inauspicious, *caro*, happened to thy charge? Ne'er have I seen a more beauteous and joyful face than was hers, when last I saw her in the arbor-walks of the Boboli."

"The poor child is harassed, Luigi, by one who should prize her peace beyond the vagaries of prideful hope."

“Ah! I understand you. The old lady still opposes the addresses of Antonio. *Corpo di Bacco!* shemay wait till too late, to realize her fond project of uniting Anina to one of noble birth. True, she sacrificed her own wealth and nobility to the good Francisco that’s gone; but ’t is scarcely fair to force poor Anina to regain them with the sacrifice of her affections.”

“It is the mother’s inconsistency that provokes me. High birth has been her *sine qua non* when the name of Anina was mentioned in connection with matrimony. And the lack of this has been the only fault she could find with Antonio; for a kindlier and more gifted *giovenotto* is not to be found in Florence. Yet at our last *conversazione*, when all the company were talking of the artist with whose fame London is ringing, the Marchioness, glad of an opportunity to depreciate Antonio, said to me, ‘Signor Ipolito, thou hast often told me that Anina’s absent admirer possessed nobility of soul and of intellect, if not of birth; why could not he manage to get imprisoned and astonish the world with his painting, as well as this unknown Florentine, if he indeed be one?’ ”

“Were it so, Signora mia,” I replied, “thou wouldst not think better of him, for he would still be a plebeian.”

“I tell thee,” exclaimed she, energetically, “Anina should marry him.”

“Why, mother,” said Anina timidly, “the artist would still be Antonio—a mere native of

Florence. Tell me in what differs Camilini, in this respect, from the famed artist who is even known only as a Florentine?"

"As THE Florentine, you mean," returned the Signora, with emphasis. And therein, Luigi, did she find an attraction equal even to her much-loved family greatness. Oh, it is a mere vain ambition that divides Antonio and Anina. Ere long, the *Misericordia* must take away their old brother, and I could die more peacefully, was Anina under the conjugal protection of such a man as Antonio. I did trust that this day month, when she will attend her cousin Beatrice to the altar, would see them also united. Would that parental opposition were the sole trouble, or that she had a more powerful friend than old Ipolito!"

"And would that the friendship I bear thee entitled me to share thy perplexities."

"Luigi, thou shalt know all, though it is vain to expect a secret kept in Florence. Yet thou canst surely restrain thy tongue, when the happiness of such an one as Anina is involved."

"Trust me,—per St. Giovanni"—

"*Bene.* Know, then, that Antonio had a goodly quantity of our Florence wines sent to London; for (would you believe it?) they tell me a flask of Aleatico costs two or three *francisconi* there;—and Tonino rightly fancied such a luxury would furnish an acceptable gift to his English friends. The first he presented nearly

destroyed a nobleman; suspicion was excited; the wines were examined, and found to contain poison. For a long time I have been sifting the matter secretly, for Tonino charges me to be circumspect, lest Anina learns his peril; and makes as light as possible of the danger by which he is surrounded. Carlo Pisani acknowledges he bought the flasks of an apothecary, and that his people transferred the wine, by mistake, before they were cleansed, and several of them contained the sediment of baneful drugs. Thus the circumstance is explained; but Carlo will not be persuaded to furnish an affidavit to the facts which will alone avail, until Antonio's safety absolutely demands it; and such he is not convinced is the case now; he says such a declaration from him will ruin his business; and he knows I am too fearful of the affair being known, to appeal to the police. Thus I have been kept at bay, and I know not what course to adopt. One of the two evils must be chosen. And each is inimical either to the wishes or the safety of Antonio."

The countenance of Luigi brightened. "Thou hast told thy dilemma," said he, "to one able to extricate thee. Ere the post leaves to-morrow, thou shalt have the affidavit."

"Think not to persuade Carlo; what means have you more than I? Explain."

"*Pazienza!* He is under a promise. Dine with me to-morrow at Marché's, and you shall be

informed more fully. Trust me wholly. Hast aught else to say ? ”

“ Naught, save to thank Heaven and thee.”

CHAPTER IV.

Juliet. “ How cam’st thou hither, tell me ? ”

Romeo. “ By love who first did prompt me to inquire ;
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot ; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore washed with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandize.”

A GROUP, consisting chiefly of females, in whose attire white was the predominant color, stood in cheerful converse upon the broadly-paved esplanade before the church of Santa Croce. The morning was not far advanced, yet so warmly did the sun beat upon the marble pavement, that the long snowy veils in which two of the party were arrayed, were put aside, and the breeze from the mountains played sportively among the dark ringlets of Beatrice, and over the more pensive countenance of her cousin. The arrival of an additional pair seemed a signal for their commune to cease ; and joining hands, the several couples stood in order, each bearing a wreath of flowers ; and when a lad, in the habit of the

church, raised on high the heavy curtain which hung before the entrance, the solemn tones of a chant were faintly heard, and the little band reverently entered. It was evidently a marriage procession. As they walked silently up the long avenue, the light tread of the fair train echoed softly in the pauses of the chant, and one might have fancied, as he gazed from a distance, through the shadowy expanse, that a company of spirits were passing from their resting-place beneath, forth to some earthly ministration. Nor were the objects around unfavorable to the indulgence of such an idea. The majestic figure of Dante leaning over from above the tomb prepared in vain to receive his dust, with his stern expression of dignified grief, the marble personification of Italy standing in the attitude of a mourner above the sepulchre of her great tragedian, the dense entablatures, the heavy architecture, breathed, in the dim light, a mystic solemnity. But all these were still, and cold, and senseless; while the bright eyes, the moving lips, the fresh and fragrant roses of the bridal party, spake of life, of life in its conscious beauty and promise. And when the gentle forms encircled, with a statue-like quietude, the railing of the altar, the tremulous accents in which the responses were uttered, the low quick breathings, the glistening tears—these spoke, indeed, of the spiritual, but of the spiritual while yet environed with the attributes of humanity.

A slight bustle denoted that the ceremony was concluded; yet was there no sign of immediate separation. The officiating priest was soon engaged in a discourse with Beatrice, which appeared to rivet the attention of the group. The old man had been her confessor from infancy, and with a truly paternal interest, he was speaking of her duties and destiny. Anina felt herself gently drawn aside, and obeying the signal of Ipolito, she followed him to the opposite side of the church. Soon after, the attention of the party was aroused by a faint cry, but whether of surprise or fear, was not clearly indicated; and, for a moment, their eyes were directed to the point whence it seemed to proceed; but there being no repetition, and the words of the priest becoming more and more interesting, they were soon absorbed again. Advancing footsteps now aroused them—not the measured and scarcely audible tread with which they had approached the altar, but the firm, quick steps of confidence and expectancy. Anina appeared, led on by a manly and graceful cavalier, whom all present immediately recognized as Antonio. Returning their eager inquiries and salutations only with a smile and a nod, he immediately addressed the now silent priest:—"Father, if thou art not weary, a new bridal service awaiteth thee, after which thy blessing and exhortation may be doubly bestowed." Astonishment was in every face; yet the manner of Antonio proved singularly

effective, and all yielded to its influence, none without surprise, yet all with alacrity; and when the *campanile* announced that the sun had reached his meridian, Antonio was the reigning star of a gay assemblage in the house of the Marchioness, and Anina was his bride. At a moment when her guests were all occupied, she stole away, and entered her mother's apartment.

"Mother, I knew not that Antonio could boast relationship with a Count, still less that he had inherited his title."

"Nor I, Anina. You do not mean"—

"Nay, I would question thee, mother."

"It is a vain question, my daughter; you know it admits but one answer"—and the old lady sighed.

"And yet the untitled Antonio is my husband; and, unless Ipolito reversed his message with thine approval"—

"Anina, thou knowest what renders renowned the much talked of picture called the 'Miserere,' purchased at *such* a price by Lord Ellmsley."

"They say it is the face of the nun."

"Anina, they say, too, that face resembles thine," and the mother embraced her child, and then gazed meaningly upon her.

A glow of delight thrilled to the heart of Anina. "I see it all," she exclaimed. "Antonio Camilini, my Antonio, is THE FLORENTINE!"

The history of the United States is a story of growth and change. From the first settlers to the present day, the nation has evolved through various stages of development. The early years were marked by exploration and the establishment of colonies. The American Revolution led to the birth of a new nation, one that was founded on the principles of liberty and democracy. The 19th century was a period of rapid expansion and industrialization. The Civil War was a pivotal moment in the nation's history, leading to the abolition of slavery and the strengthening of the federal government. The 20th century saw the United States emerge as a global superpower, with significant technological and cultural advancements. The nation's history is a testament to the resilience and ingenuity of its people.

MISCELLANY.

THE END

BYRONIA.

——“ Truths that wake
To perish never,
Which neither listlessness nor mad endeavor,
Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy !

SOMEWHAT akin to the sacred influence that individual associations throw over familiar scenes, is that with which the spell of literature invests the spot it celebrates. How much nearer to us has Irving brought England in her primitive and baronial aspect ! and who that has worthily felt the enchantment of the northern minstrel, or the heart-music of Burns's lyre, will ever wander without a home-feeling over the Highlands, or along the Tweed ! And by a transition the most natural, the musing traveller is ever fondly reverting to the origin of those associations which have so richly peopled the lone mount and the silent lake, the ruined castle and the umbrageous glen. And when circumstances of peculiar moral interest are attached to such intellectual benefac-

tors, when their remembrance is associated with something of a mournful destiny, commiseration is mingled with gratitude, and we unconsciously yield them a tribute of sympathy as sincere as it is spontaneous. It is astonishing how the indulgence of such feelings, amid the scenes which have awakened them, tends to personify their object. They evoke the image of the departed, not as it may long have existed to the eye of fancy, but with the life-like lineaments which only a love-inspired imagination—nature's holiest limner—can depict. From a fanciful vision, it assumes the ideal presence and companionship of a congenial friend.

The Byronic associations of Italy constitute an interesting episode in the meditative suggestions of the land. Of course they are not equally or universally enjoyed. But we who recognize the English language as our vernacular, and prize English literature as our heritage, are peculiarly open to their influence—especially those of us in whose minds the noble bard's effusions are associated with the thousand thrilling sentiments that embalm the remembrance of the first contemporaneous poet to whose power we were susceptible.

When sojourning within the "fair white walls" of Florence, haunting the time-stricken trophies of the "City of the Soul," or standing on the "Bridge of Sighs," we are conscious as it were instinctively of a vicinity to Childe Harold; we

identify the author with the scenes of his pilgrimage, and recognize him as an intellectual and ideal *cicerone*. The very characteristic of the Romaunt which has been a prominent point of critical objection, enhances its power in this respect. To us, thus influenced, it is not surprising that the pilgrim occasionally speaks of himself. The allusions to personal feelings with which the poem is interlineated, give to its hero this very character of life and reality. We feel his presence the more, because his attention is occasionally turned from the objects which we seem mutually to contemplate, and inwardly directed. It strikes us as natural for our companion to commune with himself aloud, or pour into our sympathizing bosoms the tale of his deep experience. Surrounded as we are by tokens of fallen grandeur, and the results of human genius, it agrees with our existent mood that humanity should be discussed; we are lured to the very portal of metaphysics. And however intrinsically sad the strain of him with whom we commune, its melancholy ardor meets a conscious want, which cold speculation could ill supply.

Byron, then, is singularly interesting to us in Italy. We remember that the very poem which is so ministering to our pleasure was there composed, and we are mindful that thence he departed to return no more. At Newstead, we think of his boisterous period of youthful conviviality—of the bright and beautiful dream of his

first love ; on the borders of the Leman, we contemplate his wild revellings with the elements, or his rich communings with serener nature, and muse upon his bitter regrets over blighted affections ; but Italy we feel was the scene of a more deliberate and introspective period—of a long and sweet converse with antiquity. As the one fearful pause antecedent to the catastrophe, as the meditative hour preceding the eventful act, was his sojourn in Italy before the fatal expedition in the drama of Byron's life. Such impressions heighten not a little the effect of the fourth canto of the Pilgrimage. When, in the hour of full and free emotion, we find relief, satisfaction, and delight, in recurring to its glowing periods, the history, the misfortunes, the very errors of the poet impart a solemnity and thrilling interest to his legacy.

Never to me were these associations more rife and vivid than in Venice—loved even “from his boyhood.” The window of my apartment overlooked one of the minor canals, whose quiet surface was rarely ruffled by a passing gondola. The solid masonry which bounded the view within a narrow compass, was darkly shaded by the mildew of age, and overgrown, at intervals, with mossy green. The polished tiles of the floor, and the antique style of the furniture, were in unison with the prevailing language without. To this sanctum was I wont to repair after the various excursions which introduce the stranger to an

acquaintance with the Ocean Queen. And by this means, the train of thought and the emotive mood, adapted to the place, were scarcely, even for a moment, invaded. Eloquent silence, an almost audible decay, and antiquated trophies of art, were about me every hour of the long summer day. I lived in the atmosphere of the past. Venetian characteristics afford an excitement to the feelings of a gentle and dream-like nature, instinct with pathos, and more conducive to vague meditation than awakening thought. Their influence is essentially different from that induced by other clustered monuments of by-gone glory ; it is as unique as the Sea-Cybele herself. The principle of association is primarily addressed, and the dim and distant forms of Henry Dandolo and Marino Faliero not unfrequently give way to his, who

"Not in vain
Has worn the sandal shoon and scallop shell."

Under the dark awning of the gondola, within the richly pictured halls of the palace, and beneath the lofty dome, we remember how often his feet have pressed the same spot, his eye rested on the same objects, his soul yielded to the same inspiration. Mingling, at even-time, with the festive throng on the piazza of St. Marks, we recall the ardent imagination and warmth of feeling which led him to dedicate to pleasure what was sacred to virtue ; gazing upon the sunburnt fea-

tures of his old gondolier, we fancy how often he must have stood by him alone upon the silent sea, witless of the mystic movements of the poet's soul; surrounded by the placid waters of the bay or the wave-washed Lido, we picture the manly vigor and beauty of his frame, as he fearlessly buffeted the waves, or urged his courser along the sands; and in the porter's lodge of the Foscari palace, beholding his helmet-like head-gear of the Horse-Guards, we think of the last sad epoch in his history—that chivalrous enterprise and lonely death. Poor Byron! (we are ready to exclaim,) how often didst thou gaze musingly, at the midnight hour, upon the calm element around thee, and yearn for something of its clearness and quietude! How must thy heart have wrestled with its despair, when not a sigh escaped thee! There must have been high and pure aspirations looming, like beacon fires, from the gloom of thy desponding hours; there must have been glimpses of an unattained good, when satiety was most deeply realized. And if, in those better moments, there had been one beside thee whom thou couldst have lawfully and truly loved—one true child of humanity to “strike the electric chain” with the wand of truth—a mind reverently sympathizing with thy genius, a heart deeply commiserating thy perversion, a being who could win back thy “lone wandering but not lost” spirit, and urge it upward—might thou not have been recalled, awakened, renewed? The

golden bowl was not yet broken, nor the silver cord loosened. Love, conscience, still lingered; reason obtained; ideality was rife; and when the sense of the right, the beautiful, the true, exists, who that has sounded the depths of his own nature will dare to despair of "nature's master-piece—the poet-soul?" Yes! wedded to pleasure as the world thought thee, and baffled in spirit as thou truly wert, we feel here, amid the ocean air and solemn aspect of Venice, how little we do really *know* of thee—how little thou didst know of thyself!



NATURAL LANGUAGE.

———“ I have learned
To look on Nature.”

By this appellation have no ordinary school of philosophers distinguished the gesticular and involuntary modes of human expression, from the more deliberate and direct vehicle of communication which we call speech. It is interesting, in every point of view, to observe and study this species of language. Few indications of innate sentiment are more authentic; and in no exterior forms are character, constitutional peculiarities, and physical temperament, more prominently delineated. For myself, having ever been prone to indulge a passion for the observation of humanity under all her aspects, the *natural language* has afforded me a fund of entertainment and instruction; and Italy affords an admirable school for its study. There is something worthy of the thorough integrity of Nature in this ordinance of her statute book. It is well that the unyielding arrogance of the proud man should impart a

rigidity to his dorsal region, throw up the chin, deepen the curvature of the spine, and render the gait measured, and the air pompous; it is expedient that the lips of him unyielding in purpose, should be habitually compressed; that wiry muscles should assume the aspect of motionless lines upon the face of the heartless; that sportive smiles, a glancing eye, and a sinister lurking meaning, should mark the cunning; and slowly evolved words, and a stiff carriage, the precise. And it is as wisely ordered that a sweet calm should rest upon the countenance of the true hearted, sunny smiles array the visage of the innocent, and a flashing eye and general activity of nerve bespeak the enthusiast. All these outworkings of nature, these honest and indelible inscriptions upon the temples of humanity, are worthy of grateful recognition. For the life of me, I cannot understand why such insignia are not as intrinsically interesting as the cloud-pictures on the sky which men note for meteorological purposes, or the veins of rock which are coned by the geologist to nomenclate the species or predicate the sub-stratum; nay, I understand not why such signs of man may not be as profitably inspected as the cut of his coat, the altitude of his chapeau, or the set of his nether garments, whereby many are wont to form ultimate judgments of his rank and merits. Assuredly there is a true philosophy in abjuring these conventional grounds of estimating our kind, and attentively perusing the more legitimate

hand-writing upon the wall, behind which the hidden elements of character are at work.

It is astonishing how many and admirable purposes are answered by this arrangement in the economy of our being. Not only does the natural language serve as a kind of exponent to the great sum of principles, spiritual and physical, involved in an individual specimen of the genus *homo*; its degrees of vigor and extent of development characterize nations as significantly as their vernacular tongues. Few parts of the globe present more favorable opportunities for enjoying a general and contrasted view of national natural language, than the southern regions of Europe, at the seasons when they are places of general resort. Take, for example, the south of Italy in winter. The reserve of the English, the vivacity of the French, the gravity of the German, the ardor of the Italian, are there displayed in strong relief; while the eccentricity of the artist, the complacency of the connoisseur, the slavery of the fashionable, and the enthusiasm of the devotee, still more minutely subdivide the varied chapter of language here displayed. The intonations and accents of their various mother tongues, differ not more palpably than do the gestures, physiognomical expression and manners, which speak for them, and in spite of them, to the observant eye. Consider for a moment the various meaning embodied in a shrug. A book might be written on the science of *shrugging*.

"It's all humbug," said a London exquisite to his companion, as they sallied towards their barouche from the portico of the Pantheon; and so saying, he momentarily lifted his shoulders: it was a shrug of contempt. "*Non cognosco, signor,*" was the reply of an Italian, as he gazed inquiringly along the streets, seeking to direct a bewildered stranger, at the same time slowly raising his back and lowering his chin: it was the shrug of indecision. "*Poverino,*" ejaculated a Roman *padrona*, as she beheld her invalid lodger incline over a blazing fire, and left the room with a Richard-like appearance about the shoulders, and an oscillating movement of the *caput*: it was a shrug, which, being literally interpreted, signifies, "*he is crazy.*"

This natural language is an admirable provision for the safe escape of dangerous elements, which, from their nature, must be "wreaked upon expression." Would I could induce the parliament of Great Britain to establish by law, an institution for the culture of this human attribute, in which the English nation are most inhumanly deficient. They are blamed, forsooth, for pugnacious propensities. In the name of common sense, when a man is so unused to speech, and so ill-starred as to have been born under the heavy accents of the Anglo-Saxon, and thus precluded from volubility, and, when he suffers the additional grievance of a lymphatic temperament—a body destitute of nervous inspiration, and more

developed in the stomach or liver than in the heart—what, I say, is such a man to do when insulted? Develope his indignation through combativeness, to be sure; in other words, knock his antagonist down. A Frenchman, under such circumstances, might palaver till his anger was dissolved in air, or dance till it went off in perspiration; a German might have recourse to his pipe; a Spaniard to his rapier; but what would an excited son of Albion find so convenient and appropriate as his fist or foot? Nature will out; and until the finer elements of the natural language are cultivated in Great Britain, direct application of muscular force must necessarily take the place of the more legitimate modes of expression, gesticulation, and nervous action.

This is not mere theory. I have often found occasion to admire the beauty, the sublime prudence involved in the obvious intentions of nature in regard to the expression of human feeling. Passion, of whatever kind, and howsoever modified, spontaneously and necessarily seeks development. If we would suffer its paroxysms to subside gradually through their appropriate channels, all would be well; and this end, I maintain, is signally subserved by the natural language. Two of the most baneful passions are pride and anger. Now, how common, in this country, is it to see an individual, upon his accession to any station, office or reputation, assume not only a prideful demeanor, (which is merely

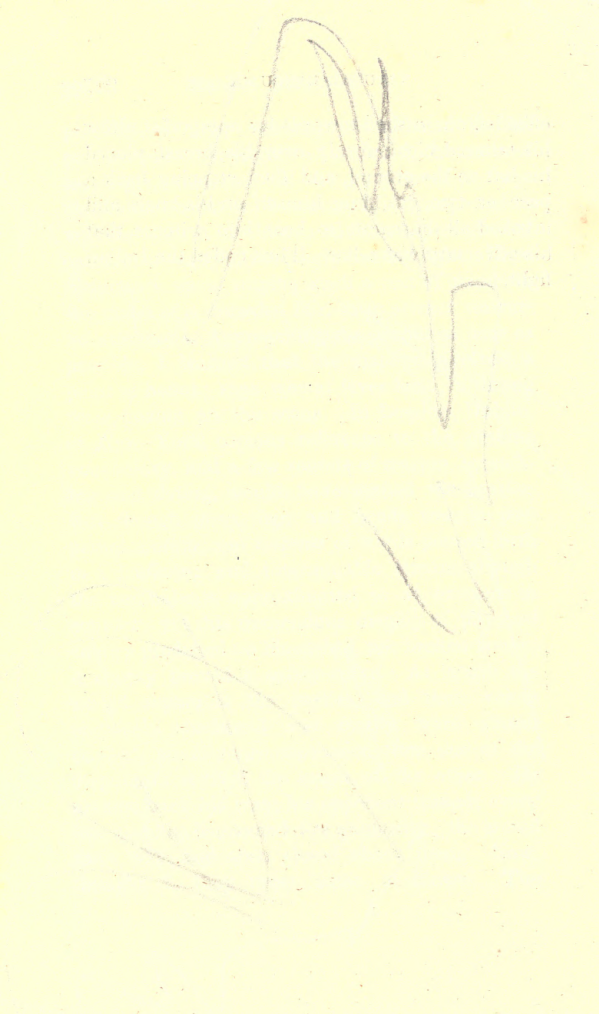
negatively injurious to the community,) but a supercilious deportment, an utter and direct contempt for the rights and feelings of others, which is positively insulting. Yet I was rather entertained than angered at the manner in which an Italian displayed the importance he felt in discharging the solemn functions of a letter-dispenser in a post-office of no common pretensions. This man seemed to delight in pronouncing his dictum upon the momentous questions propounded, often from quivering lips and with a quick breath, through the iron bars which separated him from the eager throng. Habit had apparently rendered him insensible to that part of his duty which required the presentation of letters; and he ever flung with indifference the longed-for epistle before the expectant inquirer. Like most men in authority, too, he cared little to rule over a familiar multitude; to such as he had given and refused for years, he gave and refused listlessly. But when a new face appeared at the grate, and a name was pronounced foreign to his ear, and such as he felt tolerably sure his eye had never glanced upon, there was a magnificent exhibition of his power. As deliberately as it was in human patience to suffer, would he pass letter after letter under review, half pausing as if in doubt occasionally, while visions of home were mingling in the reveries of the applicant, with a lurking, chilling fear of disappointment; alternating between hope and fear would the stranger watch

the slow motions of the man of office, till the pile was neatly arranged and deliberately transferred to its pigeon-hole; then turning towards him, as to a petitioner at his throne, the letter-king would smile at his blank visage, and lifting his right hand, wave it, with a provoking deliberation, thrice to and fro, and then slowly articulate, "*Non c'è niente, signor.*" The exquisite touches in the natural language of complacency herein discernible were truly indescribable.

As regards anger, mark the difference of its display in an Italian and an Englishman; and note the advantage which the natural language of the former gives him. At a café in Florence a Londoner deemed himself slighted by one of the waiters. The idea no sooner possessed him than forthwith rising, with one blow, he levelled the *garçon* with the floor; for which breach of the peace a month's imprisonment was awarded him. At a *trattoria* in the same city, an Italian, after waiting half an hour for a particular dish, received it not prepared according to his wishes, whereupon, being enraged, he started up, and turning to the attendant, with an air of punctilious politeness, and a voice attuned to the bitterest irony, calmly ejaculated, *Addio per sempre*; (good bye forever)—to which the other replied, with a countenance pale with rage, and a smile of sardonic gaiety, *Grazie, signor*, (thank you, sir.) The smile, the mock politeness, the ex-

pression of utter contempt manifested in the posture and countenance—in a word, the *natural language*, answered all the purpose of a fray. On another occasion, however, I fully expected to witness what it has been said is an unprecedented occurrence—an Italian single handed fight. Two disputants were waging such a war of words in the midst of a crowded fair, as to attract universal attention. Approaching the parties as near as possible, I learned that the dispute involved a point of honor; rage was at fever heat; a throng were gazing on the scene. In London, Dublin, or New York, copious reference to the profane vocabulary, and a few rounds of tearing, scratching and fisting, would have settled the matter. But though arms, legs and heads were in perpetual motion, and torrents of words poured forth in a deafening and interminable stream, though the combatants approximated so as to come in contact; yet this tremendous display of physical energy produced no bloodshed nor broken bones; it simply proved a safety-valve. At length the crowd separated the parties, and their voices obviously slackened and finally were almost hushed, when some expression from one of the disputants revived the anger of the other. He pressed back his way; his opponent turned; every line and hue betokened dire animosity; the crowd gave way, and then closed about them. Now, thought I, they must come to blows. 'The

offended one rushed towards his antagonist, drew his tattered cloak firmly over his breast, placed his hat on the ground, and then stepping back a pace or two, he flung himself on his knees and invoked all the saints to bear him witness that his adversary was a liar. Thus ended the Italian fight.



MY HOME ABROAD.

“ Ah ! where shall I so sweet a dwelling find !
For all around without, and all within,
Nothing save what delightful was and kind,
Of goodness favoring and a tender mind
E'er rose to view.”

How much to be commiserated is he to whom not a line of the poetry of human nature has been directly revealed ; who has never been lured from the sterile pathway of isolated pursuit by a flower that smiled up to him, or a murmur that fell soothingly upon his ear ; whose mind has never been charmed into blessed self-forgetfulness, by the consoling activity of native sentiment. It was but the impulse of inalienable human feeling which led Sterne to say, that if he were in a desert, he would love some cypress ; and baffled, indeed, must be his spirit who has wandered to and fro in a peopled world, and found no child of humanity whose companionship and affection could recall the simple joyousness of early and unsophisticated being. How much does the plea-

sure of a sojourner in the fairest lands depend upon the position whence he gazes forth upon their domain—upon the immediate social influences by which he is surrounded—upon his HOME ABROAD! How different will be the aspect of external nature, and the impressions of social or moral phenomena, to the wanderer who looks forth from his own solitary consciousness, and to him who views them through the loop-holes of a domestic retreat! This is not a merely speculative suggestion, as I propose to illustrate, if the reader will but pass, in fancy, to the favorite city of Italy, once the scene, and at present the witness, of Lorenzo de Medici's authority and enterprise.

The high and dark buildings which line the narrow and flag-paved street running from the Piazza di Colonna to the Mercato Nuovo, render its general aspect peculiarly sombre; yet at the season when the fiery solar influence is at its height, it is truly refreshing to turn from the dazzling heat of the open squares into these shady by-streets, so characteristic of the cities of southern Europe. The second range of apartments of one of these edifices was occupied by a family whose fortunes received their downfall under the Napoleon dynasty. The comfortable and quiet seclusion adapted to their condition, succeeded a more brilliant, but perhaps less happy establishment. At the close of a winter's day spent in the delectable employment of inspecting "lodgings for

single gentlemen," I found myself settled in one of the front rooms of this building—the domicile I had at length decided should be my temporary abode. As I sat musingly before a cheerful wood fire, my reverie was interrupted by a gentle tap at the door; and scarcely had the *entrante* passed my lips, when it quietly opened, and the presiding goddess of that little world was before me. The countenance of Antoinetta exhibited features so beautifully regular, that even when in perfect repose, they would bear the most critical perusal. But it was when lit up by a cheering smile, playing over and enlivening their bland expression, such as they wore when she thus broke in like sunlight upon my misty day-dreaming, that the witchery of her eye and the pleasantry of her air exerted their full power. In the sweet accents of her native tongue, she bade me good evening, adding that she had thought the Signor might feel solitary, and had brought in her muslin work to sit an hour with him. How thankfully he accepted the proposition need not be related. The converse of that evening sufficed for our mutual understanding. For, be it known to you, kind reader, that the social, like the physical atmosphere of Italy, is wonderfully insinuating: one discovers his adaptation at once. The Italians seem to know intuitively the latent points of sympathy between themselves and those with whom they come in contact; a short time serves either to convince them that their acquaintance

never can become a friend, or to make him so almost immediately. Nor is this all. Let a genuine Italian discern but the glimmerings of congenial sentiment, and you have his confidence; and if there be aught noble within you, the very alacrity with which you are trusted, will secure it from abuse. My fair *padrona* was betrothed to a countryman then in Britain, and her mother had resigned to her the duties of housewife, while she, Italian-like, devoted her more mature years to the exercises of religion, and to basking in the sunshine of imaginative enjoyment.

The Countess was a genuine specimen of a Tuscan lady of the old school. She still retained sufficient matronly comeliness to attest her youthful beauty, and her habits and conversation clearly evidenced the cultivation of a naturally good mind, and the urbanity of a kindly spirit; yet withal was there the strict devotion of the Catholic, and the never absent enthusiasm of the Italian. There was a dignified earnestness and grace in her manners, which almost insensibly inspired respect and interest. I could not but mark the different results of a convent education upon the mother and daughter. The faith of the former was fixed thereby; while the latter used to tell me that, until her twelfth year, having lived chiefly in a nunnery, she was truly *una angiola*; "but," she added, "when I came into the world, I saw that much of what I had been made to believe was *una bagatella*; I saw I had

been imposed upon, and so I don't think much of the whole matter." A commentary this upon anything like hood-winking in early education ! The mother earnestly sympathized with the past. Her *nobilita*, the shadowy remnant of former days, was her much-loved and constant theme. Her early and affectionate interest in me was at first unaccountable, until I learned the romantic sentiments with which the very name of American was associated in her mind. Her ideas on this subject were derived, in no small degree, from the novels of the *Seconda Valter Scott*, as she called Cooper, the translations of which she had eagerly pondered ; and prejudice not a little strengthened her partiality, for she declared that the Italians were abused by the French, and despised by the English. But there was yet another cause for the good lady's maternal regard—for I was ever spoken of as *nostra Enrichino*, and *bambino di casa*, epithets, as the Italian scholar is aware, of no small endearment—she had conceived the idea of making me a Catholic ; and if she failed, I was learned a beautiful lesson in the art of proselyting, worthy of the pure spirit of christianity. Methinks I see her now, that ardent votary of the church, as, her eye lighted up with fervent feeling, she poured forth, in measured and liquid accents, her eloquent appeals. Nor can I recall but one instance when zeal betrayed her into an impatient expression. A Ca-

puchin friar drew crowds to the cathedral, for many days of the holy week, and his harangues were the subject of general eulogium. His whole appearance betokened the practical devotee of the Romish faith. His coarse robe was girded about his waist by a rope, and the cowl being thrown far back, displayed a countenance upon which care had traced, in withering lines, the marks of premature age; the hair fell thinly over high temples, which shaded a face incessantly wearing an expression of anxious despondency. He would walk to and fro, in the marble pulpit, ever and anon prostrating himself before a crucifix, and imploring inspiration, or lean over and earnestly address his audience. To this priest the Countess would fain persuade me to repair, that I might inquire and be enlightened. She described his benignant spirit, his self-sacrificing piety, and finally, his literary attainments. To evade the suggestion, I spoke of my comparatively slight acquaintance with the language, and my consequent indisposition to attempt controversy with so finished a scholar. She surveyed me intently, and at length, half mournfully, half reproachfully, exclaimed, *Ecco il diavolo*. But the usual tenor of her efforts was so disinterested, and marked by such delicate consideration, that I respected, spontaneously, her advocacy of the views she deemed so vitally true and important. Indeed, I loved to listen to the voice of so gentle

a controversialist, modulated by the true spirit of human kindness, and inspired by an unaffected interest in a stranger's welfare.

There was a delightful characteristic in these specimens of woman in Italy; taste was subordinate to sympathy. With all their love of the beautiful—the idea of suffering most immediately and permanently awakened their affections. They were never weary of descanting upon my predecessor in the occupancy of their apartments; and I soon discovered that it was the view of his tears shed over a letter, which revealed to them the cause of his prevailing sadness, that first drew forth their kind regard. My quondam friend was one of that most curious species of the genus *homo*, found in Italy—an artist, who had nurtured a natural propensity to silent musing by three years of loitering in the sunny air of Italia. Inexplicable to them was what they called his *melanconia*, and vain my asseverations that it was merely a constitutional habit; no—children of emotion as they were, it was confidently referred to some disappointment of the affections, and all their kindly energies were bent to win my moody *amico* to hilarity. Nor were their efforts in vain. My lodgings soon became his favorite resort; and few things drew him so effectually from his abstraction as the vivacious chat of my affable hostesses.

I have ever taken a kind of Epicurean delight in the observation of my species; but *here*, it was

intellectual character which had been prominently displayed; *there*, I learned many a beautiful lesson in the chapter of human sentiment and feeling. The icy partition of cautious reserve through which one is frequently obliged to mark the heart's workings in colder latitudes, is, in that genial region, dissolved by their very intensity. I could sometimes almost fancy myself gazing through the vista of years upon a kind of primitive humanity, in beholding the responses of feeling vibrating so directly to the spell of music, the eloquence of art, or the impulse of poetic sentiment. I recognised, as never before,

“That secret spirit of humanity,
Which 'mid the calm oblivious tendencies
Of nature, 'mid her plants and weeds and flowers,
And silent overgrowings, still survives.”

Happily, then, was I located for experimenting in a new field of my favorite study. The Countess instructed me in the enthusiasm of faith; the Contessina in the poetry of life; to the one I expressed my impressions of Italy as she is, and my reverence for her as she was; to the other I spoke of her absent betrothed, and brought votive offerings gleaned from the *bouquets* of the flower-girl. How have I seen them start, and pale as the solemn chant of the *morté*, or the toll of the *Campanile*, broke indistinctly upon the ear, amid the cheerfulness of our evening *coteries*!—how

have I read the varying scenes of a drama typified in the meaning and rapid changes of their expression ! Under their *espionage* did I wander through the verdant precincts of the palace garden and gaze upon the ceremonial and the fete, and they interpreted to me the local characteristics of the place and people. And so weeks and months glided on—how swiftly ! Twice, in preparation for departure, was my portinanteau taken from its dark corner ; but it would not do. The Countess started back when she beheld it, with a sorrowful exclamation, and it was consigned to its former repose. At length the spring had fairly opened, and there was no excuse for delay. And shall I attempt to describe the feelings with which I left “my home abroad ?” No, it were a vain endeavor—for it would require a full delineation, with more than a painter’s fidelity, of the several elements which combined to render it a *home* ; but, while all this is waived in detail, it is enbalméd in an affectionate memory ; yet not altogether in vain, gentle reader, will you have taken this glimpse, if it serve to brighten in your mind severer portraiture of the Florentines of the nineteenth century.

THE AMATEUR.

“ There Art too shows, when Nature’s beauty palls,
Her sculptured marbles. and her pictured walls ;
And there are forms in which they both conspire
To whisper themes that know not how to tire :
The speaking ruins in that gentle clime
Have but been hallowed by the hand of Time,
And each can mutely prompt some thought of flame—
The meanest stone is not without a name.”

As the chief intellectual influence of Italy is that of the fine arts, one of their prominent intellectual results is to render us amateurs. Observation is engrossed with forms and sounds ; the eye and ear evince a hitherto inexperienced capacity for enjoyment. The music—the universal, metaphysical music of the land—invites to the cultivation of the hearing powers, and the ever-present forms of art lead to a practised attention of the visual organs ; so that we find ourselves insensibly drawn from the study of social circumstances, to that of influences far more abstract, but from their intimate connection with humanity, with genius, taste and feeling, not less rich in over-

powering interest. It is indeed remarkable under how many different aspects the studious observation of the productions of art ministers to mental gratification. They may be regarded with the eye of an artist, solely as illustrative of the various schools, or as embodying the true principles of his profession; or, by the student of human nature, as affording a beautiful exposition of the several epochs in the history of the development of mind; while the tasteful votary of letters delights in comparing their distinctive characteristics with those of the master-spirits of our race, whose thoughts are embodied in literature. The bold and sublime efforts of M. Angelo, the beautiful expressiveness of Raphael, the mellow and rich pencillings of Claude, the wild genius of Salvator, and the highly finished style of Leonardo, present to him striking and interesting analogies with what is familiar in the sister art of writing. It has been well observed, that the bases of these arts touch each other.

The genuine amateur, won by the attractions, and attached by a spontaneous and intelligent sympathy with the delicate dependencies and distinctions which enter into the composition of external symmetry, beauty and grandeur, gives himself to the study and enjoyment of the abstract and embodied principles of art. In such an one, the first emotions of simple pleasure have expanded into profound and inspiring interest, and the lights of acquired knowledge and im-

proving judgment have redoubled the primitive sentiment of pleasure, derived from these sources. Versed in the laws according to which all physical grace and beauty exist, accustomed to find pleasure in every object which develops these, and ever quick to detect them wherever existent, the world is to him full of enjoyment. Art's most glorious products are as cherished friends, ever awakening satisfaction, and affording consolation : blest with innumerable visions of beauty, garnered from imagination's pencillings, under nature's tuition, and glowing with a deliberate enthusiasm, which has become an instinctive principle, himself is his greatest resource. Nor are such enjoyments without a favorable moral as well as intellectual benefit. The student and admirer of the noblest human productions, who has become such from native sentiment and discriminating taste, is allied to his race by a new and interesting bond ; he may be said, with peculiar truth, to love in humanity what is truly worthy of devoted affection—her capacity of exalted effort. And however vague and ill-sustained such a feeling may be abstractly, no regard can be more intelligent and vivid, when cherished through the medium of mind's most hallowed fruits. These give life to and sustain, in the devoted mind, a free and grateful respect, the legitimate spring of genuine philanthropy.

The true amateur, then, least of all men, deserves the charge of unworthy selfishness. Few

obtain their ends with less expense to their fellow beings, or in the process of self-gratification, diffuse happier influences. Perception and taste, in some form or other, are universal, and if uncorrupted, whatever be their peculiarities, co-exist with a high and pure moral sense.

Every magnanimous spirit is rendered happy by the just appreciation of the results of mind, whatever be their character or origin. A mere general sentiment of approbation or censure in relation to remarkable works of human art, is unworthy a good understanding; and while we rejoice in liberal judgments on such subjects, discriminating views are alone satisfactory. Hence the acknowledged moral beauty of just criticism; it is the only true praise, the only improving censure. Happy, therefore, is it, that there are men so constituted as to find much of their happiness in the noble duties of a genuine amateur; men who rejoice in the deliberate indulgence of their intellectual tastes more than in devoting them, with a fatal exclusiveness, to the purposes of ambition; who become, as it were, the high-priests of art, and in their studious and sincere devotion, waft the most acceptable incense to the spirit of genius.

A GLIMPSE AT BASIL HALL.

"Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act."

At the palace of the prince Borghese in Rome, several young English and American artists were engaged in copying the renowned productions of the old masters. Portray to yourself, kind reader, two large halls, the walls of which are lined with paintings, and intercommunicating by a side-door, now thrown open for the benefit of the parties. In the first of these apartments are erected three easels, before which, in the attitude of painters, stand—first a Virginian, intent upon the exquisite Magdalen of Correggio—opposite, the native of a country town of Great Britain, transferring, as nearly as possible, the Prodigal Son of the great Venetian—while, within a few feet of the former, a Londoner is travelling for the inspiration of Titian, by contemplating his "Sacred and Profane Loves." The artists may thus be said to occupy, relatively, the three points of an isosceles triangle. Gaze now, through the above-

mentioned passage, and behold, at the extremity of the second and lesser hall, the figure of a Baltimorean—fancying, perchance, the surprise of the natives when they see *his* copy of the inimitable Cupid beside him.

These worthy followers of the rainbow art were wont to amuse themselves, and beguile the time, with conversations upon the merits and manners of their respective countries; and occasionally, by a very natural process, such amicable debates would assume not a little of the earnest spirit of controversy. Then would the brush fall less frequently upon the canvass, the eye linger less devotedly upon the great originals around, and, ever and anon, the disputants would step a pace or two from the object of their labors, raise aloft their pencils, as if, like the style of the ancients, they subserved equally the purposes of art and of warfare, or wave their mottled palettes as shields against the arrows of argument. A full history of these discussions—hallowed by the scene of the combat, diversified by the characters of the combatants, and dignified by the nature of the points contested—would doubtless be a valuable accession to our literature. The great topics of national policy, domestic manners, republicanism, aristocracy, slavery, corn laws, &c., as unfolded in the elegant and discerning disputations of the absentees in a Roman palace, would prove something new, vivid, and seasonable. But to me falls the humbler task of narrating one scene

of the drama, as illustrative of the wisdom and safety of the advice of Polonius.

On a day when the war of words had run unusually high, there was a momentary, and, as it were, a spontaneous quietude. After the manner of their predecessors in the same city, years by-gone, the gladiators rested upon their arms. There was an interlude of silence. They gradually re-assumed the appropriate occupations of the hour; and a few unusually fine touches were bestowed upon the slowly-progressing copies, when the aspiring portrayer of the beautiful parable thus opened a new cannonade:

“Well, smooth over, as you may, the blot of slavery, and deny or palliate, as you best can, the charge of non-refinement, the world will never admit the existence of true civilization in a country where so barbaric a practice as *gouging* prevails.”

At the commencement of this speech, the pencil of the Virginian had stopped transfixed within an inch of the pensive countenance on his canvass; and with nerves braced in expectancy, he awaited the issue. And when the orator, like a second Brutus, paused for a reply, his adversary was mute—perhaps from indignation, probably in the absorption consequent upon preparing to refute and chastise. The Londoner wheeled around, and, with a nod of congratulation to his brother-islander, and a provoking and triumphant smile upon the Virginian, begged to be informed “of

the origin and nature of the *American* custom of gouging?" When, lo! there were heard quick steps along the polished floors, and as the eyes of the artists followed their direction, the form of the Baltimorean emerged from the adjoining hall. His painter's stick, palette, and brush, were grasped convulsively in his left hand, as with energetic strides he reached the centre of the arena, and gazed meaningly upon the disputants.

"You would know, sir," he exclaimed, eyeing fiercely the hero of the British capital, "what is gouging? Go, sir, to Basil Hall—your literary countryman; when ascending the Mississippi, *he* was put on shore by the captain of a steamboat for ungentlemanly deportment—and on the banks of that river, sir, *he was gouged!*" As the last emphatic words exploded, a gentleman, who had been viewing the paintings, abruptly left the room. The Londoner looked wonders—his compatriot tittered—the Cupid-limner wiped his brow.

"Who was that?" inquired the Virginian.

"That, sir, was Captain Hall!"

THE OPERA.

“ Can it be said, that there is such an art as that of music for those who cannot feel enthusiasm ? Habit may render harmonious sounds as it were a necessary gratification to them, and they enjoy them as they admire the flavor of fruits or the ornament of colors ; but has their whole being vibrated and trembled responsively, like a lyre, if, at any time, the midnight silence has been broken by the song, or by any of those instruments which resemble the human voice ? Have they in that moment felt the mystery of their existence, in that softening emotion which re-unites our separate natures, and blends in the same enjoyment the senses and the soul ? ”

WERE it only that the opera, like every national entertainment, is typical of the general taste, and in Italy affords the most free arena for talent, to an observant traveller it must be highly important ; but it is by the strong constraint of earnest sympathy that I dwell upon its character and influences. In point of excellence, simply as a popular diversion, it is unrivalled ; and the chief, if not the only exception, which can be made to its detriment, springs from the deficiencies, not of the amusement, but of those to whose good it is designed to minister. For the want alike of that physical organization upon which the pleasure derivable from music depends, or of the sentiment

and feeling, according to which that pleasure is bounded, must equally be denominated deficiencies, since they bar a species of gratification as refined as it is rich and absorbing.

But it were indeed unjust to truth and human nature, to regard the opera, in its genuineness, solely as one of those means which the selfish ingenuity of man has contrived for occupying or even solacing the intervals of active existence. Its origin and legitimate intent are far higher and better; and although many may avail themselves of it for purposes of convenience, or at the suggestion of that restless craving for fashionable baubles, which is the besetting sin of the thoughtless, there are, and must ever be, better spirits to whom justice will refer its claims.

As a subject merely of speculation, the opera might be deemed an unphilosophical representation of humanity. As her master passions are ever developed at once and fervently, the idea of exhibiting them through the regular and measured medium of song, would seem essentially unnatural. Yet, as it is impossible in the drama to render the illusion complete—as in the most perfect efforts of the dramatist and the actor, the *unreal* is palpably evident—in adopting a more deliberate and pre-determined form of expression, nothing of imitative excellence is lost, while, in general effect, much is gained. In the opera, art and nature unite in their highest excellence. There is all the power of stage effect, the lan-

guage of gestures and expression, the conventional paraphernalia of the theatre, with the super-added power of the most expressive melody—that of the human voice exerted to the highest point of its natural capacity, and cultivated by the intervention of one of the most scientific and arduous of studies, to a degree almost incredible.

If speech is the readiest means of moral expression, and what has been termed the natural language the most unstudied and apposite, music, the breathing forth of the spirit in song, is the most spiritual, and therefore, more beautifully and delicately typical of the varying emotions which inspire it. To this form of expression we turn not, indeed, in the most passionate moments of experience, but when to these the calmer mood has succeeded, when love begins to assume the settled and deep character of a passion, when the shock of grief has given way to its calm sadness, and kindling hope slowly lessens the early heaviness of disappointment, when the quiverings of indecision have become composed into clear fixedness of purpose, and the sense of overwhelming joy is fast losing itself in the deep peace of conscious happiness—in such ultimate stages of the passions, when their restless elements have become, in a measure, tranquillized, and their language more deliberate, then is it wont to pour itself forth in measured, but moving song. And if, in the opera, the limits of this natural order are occasionally exceeded, what is it but an

exercise of that poetical license, upon which even philosophy must contentedly smile?

The opera is the grand result of a general and discriminating passion for music. Without such a proximate cause, its existence is truly impossible. It is this which gives rise to and sustains, not only the institution, but that remarkable and scarcely appreciated talent which is its vital principle. It has ever been more or less the custom, even in the most civilized communities, to regard those individuals whose lives are devoted, and whose present happiness is involved, in thus ministering to the general pleasure, with any sentiment rather than that of grateful respect. The evidence of this is to be found in the actual moral rank assigned to such a profession, and its cause is too often, doubtless, attributable to want of character in the members, and to that proverbial capriciousness which society ever evinces in relation to those professedly devoted to its diversion. The actual sympathy and respectful consideration cherished and manifested by the Italians for their favorite entertainment, and its worthy children, is most interestingly obvious to a stranger. It is, too, delightful to observe the conduct, the effect, all the phenomena of an Italian opera. Evening after evening we behold the same countenances intently studious of the performance, the same votaries luxuriating in melody, criticising intonations—Epicureans at the banquet of Euterpe. So well regulated is the police, and so genuine

and universal the taste for music, that order, attention and quiet are effectually secured. The audience, indeed, go thither to partake of an habitual gratification. No sound but a *brava* spoken, as by one deep voice during a momentary pause, or the full burst of general approval, interrupts the pervading silence.

And what the general will of a people supports, equally in the way of amusement as in the graver concerns of life, must bear the impress of national character, and for this, if for no other reason, should merit respect. This is singularly true in relation to the opera. Happy is that people whose taste has induced, whose discrimination has improved, and whose characteristic interest well sustains this morally beautiful entertainment.

To define justly the surpassing charms of Italian vocal music is indeed impossible; and yet, if in so entrancing a pleasure as that derivable from this source, self-analysis be practicable, perhaps it will be discovered that in this, above most other species of melody, all the faculties are gratified. The ingenious combinations and intricate art delight the mental perceptions, its unanticipated variations and undiscernible power and facility of development captivate the imagination, while passion is excited by the imperceptible encroachments of its enchanting harmony over the empire of the heart. There is indeed a kind of universality in this singular, this unequalled vocalism. The heart often beats with eager enthusiasm,

when the notes of martial music swell upon the air, an elevating sense of grandeur is awakened by the deep tones of a sacred choir, and a national air or household stave, by the force of association, will electrify the auditor. Yet something of all these effects, and something beyond and above all of them, can faithful introspection detect in the bosom agitated, soothed, inspired by the higher efforts of an Italian professor.

To the susceptible *student* of its influences, the opera, in its perfection, is a poetical representation of the deep things of life—of those passions which operate most powerfully and universally in the human heart—of that mysterious and intricate connection between motive and action, sentiment and thought, imagination and truth, which in its development, constitutes the living poetry of our being. Such an one understands the mental experience of Alfieri, who says that the plots of some of his best tragedies were conceived while listening to the grand opera. And what medium like music—music with all its depth and pathos, all its subtlety and infinity of expression, all its spiritual magnetism—for portraying to the heart its own indescribable capacity of feeling? And what an order of talent is that, which can successfully wield the power of expression requisite for a genuine opera performer!

The votary of imaginative and intellectual happiness finds in this pleasure a satisfaction similar in kind, though much more exalted, to

that which the lover of physical science discovers in analyzing and combining the elements of matter. There is the same eager delight, which springs from the vivid knowledge acquired only by searching and successful experiment; but it is experiment upon self—not that which developes the anatomical relations of the body, but that which lays open, by a beautiful process of excitation, the delicate machinery of the inner and unseen being; it is the yielding up of one's native sentiment to the heavenly sway of the deepest melody, till its elements dissolve and combine in all the purest and most perfect forms of emotion. How palpable to the heart becomes its capacity of love, in all its endless modifications! and how keenly brilliant to the imagination shine its own magic energies, when both are bathed, excited, dissolved within the limitless scope of deeply undulating music!

GREENOUGH.

“ There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,
Where sculpture with her rainbow sister vies.”

ON one of the last afternoons preceding my embarkation, I had sat a long hour opposite a striking, though by no means faithful, portrait of Greenough, while one of the fairest of his kindred spoke fondly of him, and charged me with many a message of love for the gifted absentee. On a table beneath the picture stood one of the earliest products of his chisel. I glanced from the countenance of the young sculptor, to the evidence of his dawning genius; I listened to the story of his exile; and thenceforth he was enshrined high and brightly among the ideals of my heart. With rapid steps, therefore, the morning after my arrival in Florence, I threaded the narrow thoroughfare, passed the gigantic cathedral, nor turned aside till, from the top of a long and quiet street, I discerned the archway which led to the domi-

cile of my countryman. Associations arose within me, such as the time-hallowed and novel objects around failed to inspire. There was something intensely interesting in the idea of visiting the isolated sanctum of a votary of sculpture, to one who was fresh from the stirring atmosphere of his native metropolis. Traversing the court and stairway, I could but scan the huge fragments of marble that lined them, ere entering a side door, I found myself in the presence of the artist. He was seated beside a platform, contemplating an unfinished model, which bore the impress of recent moulding. In an adjoining apartment was the group of the Guardian Angel and Child—the countenances already radiant with distinctive and touching loveliness, and the limbs exhibiting their perfect contour, although the more graceful and delicate lines were as yet undeveloped. One by one I recognized the various plaster casts about the room—mementos of his former labors. My eye fell on a bust which awakened sea-pictures—the spars of an elegant craft, the lofty figure of a boatswain, the dignified bearing of a mysterious pilot. It was the physiognomy of Cooper. And yon original, arch looking gentleman? Ah! that can be no other than Francis Alexander. Surely those Adonis-like ringlets, so daintily carved, belong to one whom it is most pleasing to remember as the writer of some exquisite verses under the signature of Roy. No one can mistake the benevolent features of Lafayette, or the expressive

image of the noble pilgrim-bard ; or fail to linger in the corridor, over the embodiment of one of his fairest creations—the figure of the dead Medora. In other studios of the land I beheld a more numerous and imposing array ; but in none could I discover more of that individuality of design and execution which characterises native intellectual results.

Coleridge's favorite prescription for youthful atheism was *love* ; on the same principle would we commend to the *admiration* of the scoffer at a spiritual philosophy, the unwavering and martyr-like progress of genius toward its legitimate end. In this characteristic, the course of all gifted beings agree. They have a mission to fulfil ; and lured betimes, as they may be, by the flowers of the way-side, and baffled awhile, as is the destiny of man, by vicissitude—from first to last the native impulse, the true direction, is everywhere discernible. In the case of Greenough, this definiteness of aim, this solemnity of determination, if we may so call it, is beautifully evident. The waxen carriages he wrought in the intervals of school discipline, the wooden cimeters he carved for his play-fellows, and his chalk statue of William Penn—the first absolute development of his taste—these efforts will serve as the “early indications” to which biographers are so partial. Often did he pay the penalty of tardiness, by lingering to gaze at a wooden eagle which surmounted the gateway of an old edifice he daily

passed—thinking, as he told me, *how beautiful it must be to carve such an one*. But it was not until boyhood was merged in youth, that the deep purpose of heart distinctly presented itself. Happy was it that at this critical moment, an intellectual benefactor stood by to encourage and direct the youthful aspirant. Thrice happy for Greenough, that one equal to the appreciation of his mind, and able auspiciously to sway its energies, proved his friend. Such a Mentor he found in Washington Allston. And, in this connection, we cannot forbear hazarding the inquiry—Why has not the liberal discernment of our community, ere this, given this distinguished artist the power of dispensing similar benefits to others who might equally reward and honor the obligation? Will it not, at some future day, be considered one of the anomalies of the times, that a highly gifted proficient in the philosophy of art was suffered to live, in comparative obscurity, within hail of our richly endowed University, without that institution being favored with the results of his mind on this ennobling subject?

When Greenough arrived in Genoa he was yet in his minority. He entered a church. A statue, more perfect than he had ever beheld, met his eye. With wonder he saw hundreds pass it by, without bestowing even a glance. He gazed in admiration on the work of art, and marked the careless crowd, till a new and painful train of thoughts was suggested. “What!” he solilo-

quized, "are the multitude so accustomed to beautiful statues that even this fails to excite their passing notice? How presumptuous, then, in me, to hope to accomplish aught worthy of the art!" He was deeply moved, as the distance between him and the goal he had fondly hoped to reach, widened to his view; and concealing himself among the rubbish of a palace-yard, the young and ardent exile sought relief in tears. "O, genius!" I musingly exclaimed, as I went forth with this anecdote fresh from his lips, "how mysterious thou art! And yet how identical are the characteristics of thy children! Susceptible and self-distrusting, and yet vividly conscious of high endowments—mighty to execute and quick to feel—pressing on amid the winning voices of human allurements, or the wailing cry of human weakness and want—as pilgrims bent on an errand of more than earthly import—ever pilgrims through a night of dimness and trial, and yet ever beholding *the star*, hearing the angel-choir, and hastening *on* to worship!"

On one of the most delicious evenings of my sojourn, I accompanied Greenough to the studio where he proposed to erect his statue of Washington. It was a pretty edifice, which had been formerly used as a chapel; and from its commodious size and retired situation, seemed admirably adapted to his purpose. The softened effulgence of an Italian twilight glimmered through the high windows, and the quiet of the house was

invaded only by distant rural sounds, and the rustling of the nearest foliage in the new-born breeze. There was that in the scene and its suggestions which gratified my imagination. I thought of the long and soothing days of approaching summer, which my companion would devote, in this solitary and beautiful retreat, to his noble enterprize. I silently rejoiced, that the blessed ministry of nature would be around him, to solace, cheer and inspire, when his energies were bending to their glorious task; that when weariness fell upon his spirit, he could step at once into the luxurious air, and look up to the deep green cypresses of Fiesole, or bare his brow to the mountain breeze, and find refreshment;—that when doubt and perplexity baffled his zeal, he might gaze towards the palace roofs and church domes of Florence, and recall the trophies of art wrought out by travail, misgivings and care, that are garnered beneath them;—that when his hope of success should grow faint, he might suspend the chisel's movement, raise his eye to the western horizon, and remember the land for which he toiled.

Thus musing, I perused the thoughtful countenance of the sculptor, and fancied the tenor of his reflections, as he stood thus on the appointed scene of his labors. Men conscious merely of ordinary or selfish motives, can enter upon any undertaking with thoughtless alacrity; but when a human being is about to put forth his strength

for posterity—to embody an idea, sentiment or theory dear to man—whether it be in the flexible frame-work of language, or the glowing delineation of the pencil, or whether he

——“fix thought, heart, soul, mind,
To burn, to shine through the pale marble veins,”

he must be conscious, if in anywise worthy of his vocation, of profound solicitude, as well as high and hopeful aspirations. Such contending emotions I imagined were then at work in the generous bosom of my friend, and ardently did I hope for the triumph of the latter. May sculpture smile upon her devotee of the new world! may the benignant countenance of Washington beam with life-like vividness in the visions of the artist, and his image emerge nobly from its marble sleep, unspotted by any envious stain! firm be the hand, and clear the spirit of the sculptor, till his great work be completed; and long may it stand, a proud monument to his genius.

MODERN ITALY.

“ We admire thee now
As we admire the beautiful in death.
But why despair ? Twice hast thou lived already,
Twice shone amid the nations of the earth
As the sun shines among the lesser lights of heaven.”

THE manners and morals of Italy, like the same characteristics of other countries, are sometimes condemned, without discrimination, even by intelligent as well as virtuous men. Yet not only should the general fact, that the intercourse of travellers is usually limited to the extreme exemplars of the population of a country, be kept in view, in judging of character in Italy ; let it be also borne in mind that the choicest spirits of a nation, in such a political condition, are often found only in the shades of retirement at home, or enduring voluntary exile in a foreign land. “ Character,” says a distinguished authoress, “ is an instinct ; it is more allied with nature than the understanding ; and yet circumstances alone give men the opportunity of developing it.” And to

the sojourner in Italy, who marks the unfolding of this instinct, where it is most truly and natively developed, in that inner tabernacle of life which we call *home*, will be revealed such qualities of humanity as are rarely, if ever, known in equal freshness and beauty. The modern Italian character is far more intimately associated, in my mind, with the memory of acts and sympathies of rare urbanity and friendliness, than with the by-way specimens of imposition and mendicity, with which travellers seem to delight in interlarding their journals. He who, in estimating character, attaches due importance to what have been philosophically denominated the *affective* powers, will scarcely dwell despairingly upon the characteristics even of the present inhabitants of Italy. They are, in truth, the children of feeling. And hence we find the uneducated peasantry and artisans appreciating and relishing, often most enthusiastically, the poetry and music of their country. The modification of Petrarch's sonnets, and their becoming popular simply in an oral form, is a phenomenon explicable only on the ground of a national taste and enthusiasm. Nor have these general features ceased to be. Although "silent rows the songless gondolier," the stanzas of Tasso are not forgotten in Venice, nor does Ariosto cease to amuse the crowd on the Mole at Naples. If, therefore, one who mixes with the multitude, adapting himself sufficiently to their temperament and modes of

expression, who goes with them to the opera and the festival, and especially, is brought near them in the family, fails to discover and feel a remarkable degree of the pure spirit of human brotherhood, such as shall impress his heart and win him from his prejudices, we think his experience must be singularly unfortunate.

Certain it is, indeed, that the intellectual charms, the religious graces, the native modesty, which are the glory of the American female character, are sometimes wanting; and yet, in frequent instances, one cannot but feel baffled in an attempt to point out their opposites. There is often a rich and perfect susceptibility, without any great depth of sentiment; there is a spirit of affectionate kindness, but its extension is seemingly a kind of constitutional habit; there is a pride without true dignity, and an open, playful, genuine nature, which yet we are almost persuaded, but for undoubted evidence, to brand as habitual affectation. Let one imagine loveliness combined with unrestrained and unrestrainable spirit, illumined with passionate feeling, and seconded by a language whose very accents are poetic, and a manner frank, and, from its intrinsic peculiarities, interesting, and he may have a faint conception of an Italian beauty. Let him portray to himself a vivid and restless imagination, over whose magic-working energies no moral control presides, and into whose brilliant images no meditative coloring enters, an intellect too active and inconstant for

intense or elevated action, a heart exquisitely alive to every faint impression of sympathy and love—in a word, a spirit ardent, unchastened by the perfect sentiment of religion, unnerved by the holy sinews of christian principle, and yet glowing, restless and energetic—and he may arrive at an inadequate, but not incorrect idea of a species of female character in Italy.

General manners and morals are, indeed, proverbially too loose, not to merit the condemnation of the just observer. How far this is ascribable to the political and physical peculiarities of the country, an unprejudiced man cannot easily declare; while candor compels him to confess that these palliating causes exist. I have remarked, as a striking proof of the want of intellectual resources among the Italians, their sympathy for one who, from choice or necessity, is even temporarily solitary. And the importance which the mere conventional acts of life, and the occasional intervention of amusement, have acquired in their estimation, evinces the mournful absence of more worthy and truly valuable employments, both for the time and intellect.

Let it ever be remembered, in view of the present moral and social condition of Italy, how early the “fatal gift of beauty” provoked those predatory incursions which have so despoiled her shores, and neutralized her nationality. How often have the glittering ranks of an invading host gleamed, like a meteor of ill omen, amid the

mists of that mountain barrier, which nature has interposed between her favorite land and the surrounding nations!

The history of Italy, in the middle ages, is a detail of successive contests, internal and foreign, the only result of which seems to have been the settling down of the political being of the whole country into a kind of hydra-despotism—a government shared by foreign princes, ecclesiastical rulers, the inhabitants (and their representatives) of the several states. During the long twenty years of Napoleon's domination, whether enduring the horrors of famine in besieged Genoa, sacrificing to the Moloch of war upon the plains of Lombardy, or sending the flower of her army to perish amid Russian snows, she was courting martyrdom only to secure a change of masters, or minister to the ambition of the ascendant. It is perhaps impossible, for a visitor of the present day, to realize that this land has indeed been the scene of such constant, severe and unsuccessful warfare. The peace which has been enjoyed by other countries of the globe—a peace no less fruitful of general prosperity and general intellectual growth, than void of the ever active causes of commotion—with such a tranquillity Italy seems never to have been blessed.

There are, indeed, few problems more difficult to solve satisfactorily, than that of the prospects of this country, as regards its vital interests.

The several states, if united and penetrated by a just revolutionary sentiment, would advance towards independence as rapidly and certainly as the moral circumstances of the people would permit. But this is very far from the case, as the experience of the past and the aspect of the present most clearly indicate. There is Austria, on one side, jealous of her foothold in this devoted land; and, perhaps, of all their political sufferings, none is more galling to the Italians, than the insulting presence of Austrian soldiery—an evil which the Pope, as a measure of self-defence, is continually encouraging. Then the corroding internal divisions, which seem stronger and more baneful in proportion to the motives for union, are an awful barrier to the enfranchisement of the whole country. Such, too, is the power of the priesthood, and their influence over the women, that through them the existence of any liberal sentiment is almost immediately made known, and its extension prevented. Indeed, this mutual conspiracy, for, viewed in reference to its operation, it merits no lighter name, between the two classes of community from which, according to nature and truth, the chief purifying influence should proceed, constitutes the spring which embitters and undermines all excellence, individual and political.

But a deeper cause, and one involving every other, is discoverable in the want of intelligence and moral sentiment among the people. In short,

while the liberalizing spirit and improving influences of the age have to some extent become diffused in Italy, while we see distinct indications of the decline of ecclesiastical power and ignorant superstition, and hear of the king of Naples visiting the English and French courts to gain experience in the art of good government, we cannot but feel that Italy is not yet virtuous enough to maintain the forms or evolve the moral glory of genuine national freedom.

There are times when the American visitor is simultaneously impressed with the social and moral pre-eminence of his native land, and the local attractions of this; and is thus led to think of them in comparison with each other. In such a view it is impossible to lose sight of the several causes which have combined to form the present moral atmosphere and intellectual spirit of the two countries. In Italy, ages of barbarism and warfare, gradually changing to a more refined existence, produced a brilliant period of chivalry and art, and then, amid despotic influences, acting upon a national constitution, and in a country, peculiarly exposed to their worst effects, brought in the present form of society. With us the bracing air of freedom, alive with the higher impulses to action, teeming with moral motive, elevating knowledge and religious enthusiasm, naturally created a moral constitution presenting almost a complete contrast. What cause for wonder, if, destitute of a free arena, the ambition

of a young Italian of the present day is merged in a frivolous passion for amusement?—if, when the sublime motive of a national spirit is wanting, men think within the narrowest circle of human sympathies?—if the women, looked upon as the victims, and not aspired to as the honors of the other sex, cease to value the virtues which are their highest, but most unappreciated ornaments?

To many individuals, perhaps, the imaginative, the purely intellectual character of the enjoyments which attention and susceptibility may extract from the scenes and agencies of Italy, is an objection. These characteristics are, indeed, at war with the ultra-utilitarian spirit of the age. Yet there is a vastness in that source of happiness denominated the *ideal*, of which such cavillers are unaware. Notwithstanding the capacity of suffering involved in a sensibility to this moral incitement, life would be almost bereft of interest, were the fountains of imaginative enjoyment sealed to mortals. We know not, nor under the present condition of being can we know, how delicately, yet universally, sentiment mingles with and marks every pleasure of existence. Its commonest incidents, its familiar routine, not less than its exalted offices, insensibly imbibe and radiate a spiritual coloring—an interest not their own, in which consists the true secret of the delight they afford.

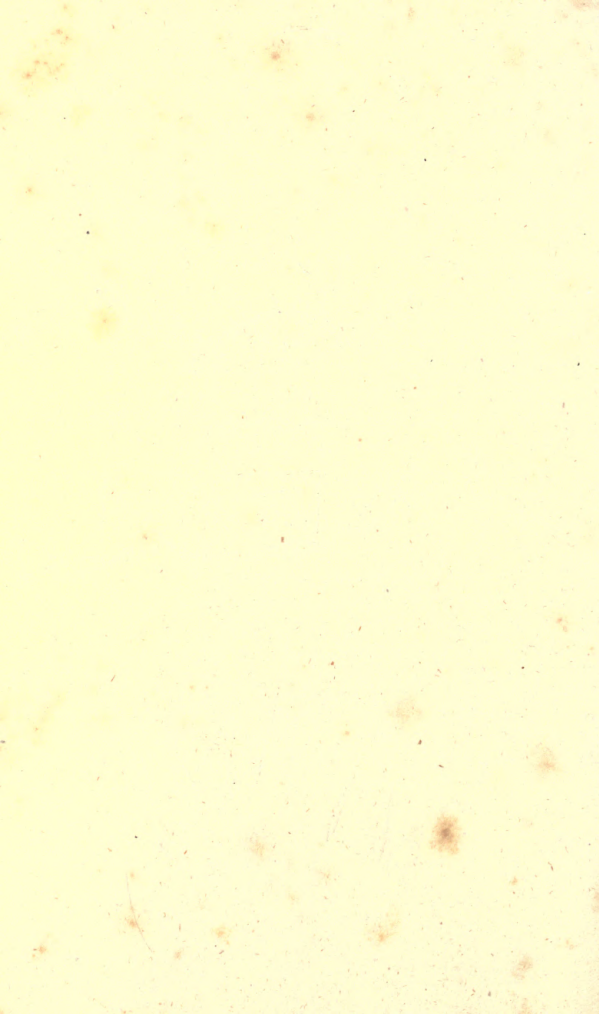
There are few countries better calculated to nourish and bring out the latent *ideal* of existence than this, although here, as everywhere, its expansion must be aided. The great intellectual tendency of the legitimate influences of Italy is, indeed, to maintain the supremacy of taste, and to quicken the action of the sentiments. In younger and more agitated communities, there is much to excite a vigilant habit of observation, and develope native intelligence; and in scenes less environed by associations of almost universal interest, through a spirit of ambition or the bustling zeal of general enterprise, the mental powers are variously and often vigorously unfolded. But in this, the absence of all occasion of immediate excitement from the agitation of any one of the great elements of society, and the comparatively narrow circle in which the machinery of commerce and government move, are circumstances which serve to exhibit in broad relief those more intimate relations, and less conventional, and therefore more interesting influences, with which human society abounds.

One is singularly uninterrupted in the endeavor to brighten into poetry the pathway of his being. He is undisturbed, nay, he is not unfrequently encouraged by the atmosphere in which he lives. Tranquillity of position—that pre-requisite to the enjoyment of a poetical temperament—clears the way, and beautiful forms in nature, glorious productions of art, a passionate social

character, time-hallowed associations, a melodious language, and the teeming presence of musical influences, are about him to feed the flame of that enthusiasm which idealizes, and therefore enriches human nature.

There is, surely, ground for moral satisfaction in thus scanning, under the excitement of sympathy, the present scenes and intellectual influences of Italy. We stand among her ruins, eloquent of past greatness, and instinctively gaze around for a lingering ray of existing glory ; we contemplate, with impatient sadness, her palsied political being, and yearn to lose its memory in dwelling upon the tokens of mental prowess and imaginative expansion ; and these we find in the beauty and perfection of her literature and art. There is something singularly consolatory in thus tracing out a conservative principle from amid the insignia of decay and prostration. There is something quickening to the love of humanity, something which renews our faith in her progressive tendencies, in beholding the continuance, and feeling the power of an intellectual dominion, a heritage of mind, an empire over the heart, where the more external sway of the political sceptre has been most sadly subverted.







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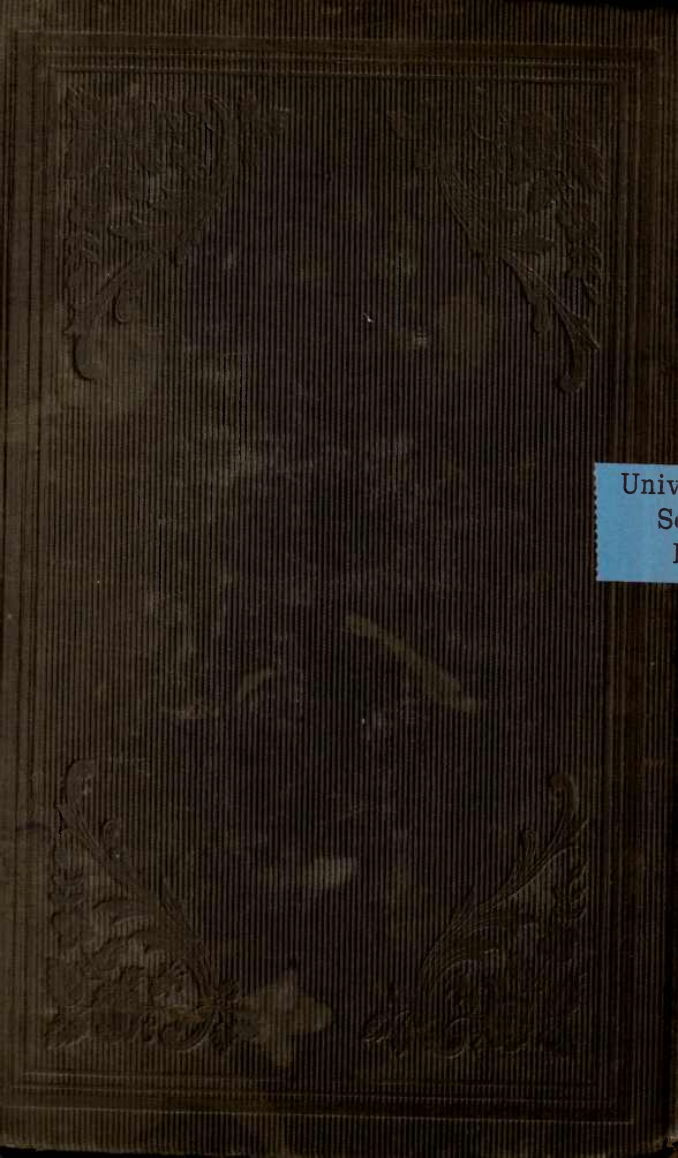
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